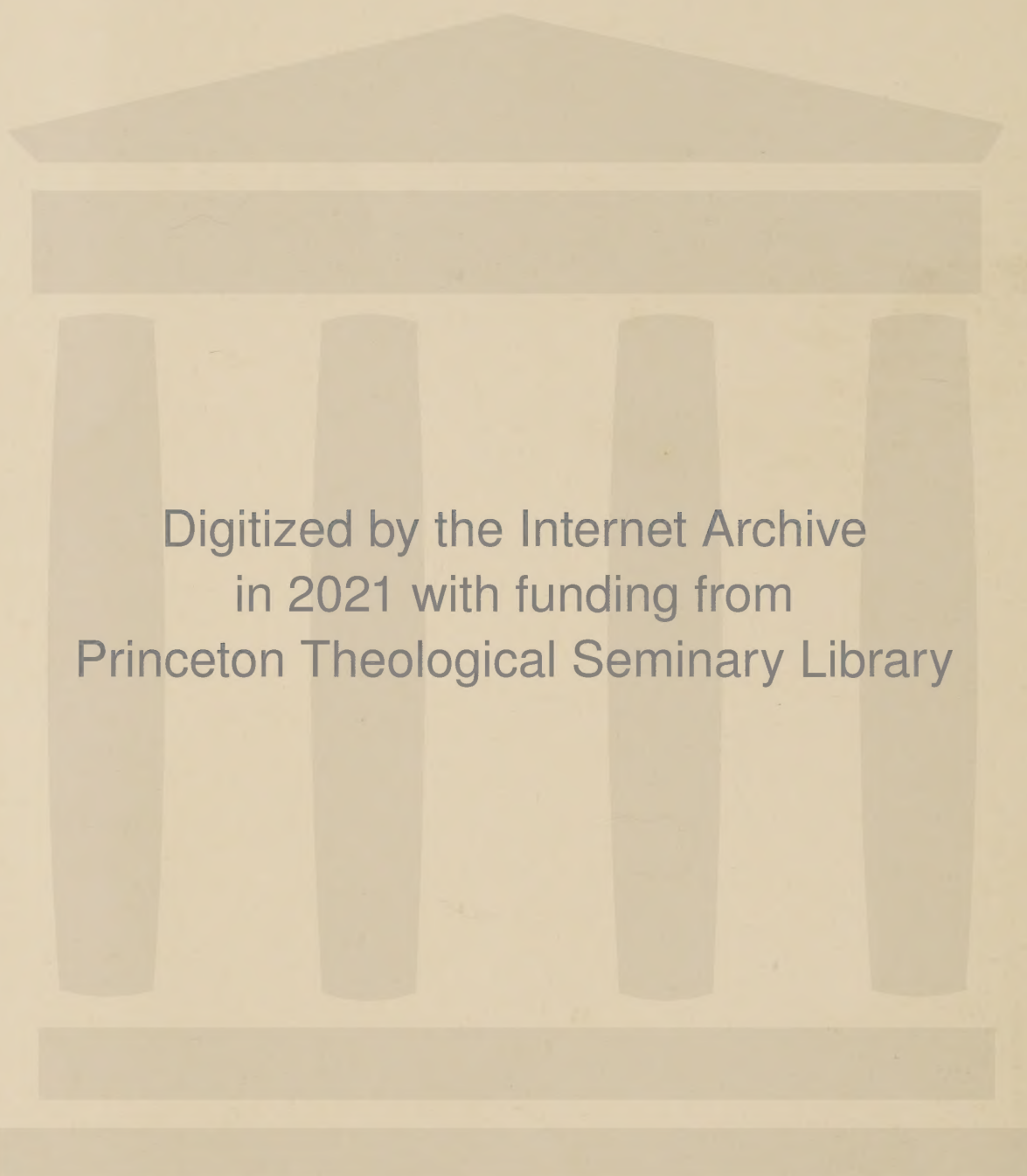


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that the light of God's truth may shine bright and increase

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*Stand at the crossroads and look
Ask for the old paths, where the good way is
Walk in it, and find rest for your souls*

JEREMIAH 6:16

The Princeton Theological Review

Dedicated to the Rev. Dr. Charles Hodge (1797-1878)

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From the Editors

The Proposed Revision to Amendment B *We Stand at a Crossroads*

The 1996 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) sent Amendment B (the "Fidelity and Chastity Amendment") to its presbyteries as a proposed change to the Book of Order. The presbyteries ratified that amendment, and in so doing they stood in solidarity with Scripture, the worldwide Church and the Christian tradition for the sexual purity of her leaders. The amendment is certainly not a requirement that such leaders be sinless; rather, it is a requirement that they be willing to call sexual sin "sin," and not declare it a right or a virtue.

In the same week it officially added Amendment B to the Book of Order, the 1997 General Assembly sent a proposed revision of the amendment to the presbyteries. The difference between the original wording and the revision may seem negligible, and it may even appear more conciliatory than the original. The divergence between the two documents, however, marks two incompatible courses which the church may take. An examination of the proposed revision of Amendment B reveals that it is little more than an ingenious and equivocating piece of linguistic legerdemain.

The rewording is as subtle as it is substantial. Amendment B calls on church leaders to "lead a life in obedience to scripture." The proposed revision calls on them to "lead a life in obedience to Jesus Christ under the authority of scripture." To the committed and honest Christian there may seem to be little or no difference between the two. Yet context in this case is everything. Our first clue that there is something lurking below the surface is that opponents of Amendment B vigorously seek this change of wording. If there is little difference between the two, why the furor, why the organized campaign to assure the passage of the revision at the presbytery level? Is it likely that the revision's advocates would spend precious time and resources to see it ratified if they did not know it was susceptible to multiple interpretations owing to its ambiguity?

Second, the revision utilizes a standard exegetical procedure used by some opponents of traditional Christian sexual mores to claim access to moral principles under the name of "Jesus." A common method for deriving these principles is to separate the supposedly "authentic" from the "inauthentic" sayings of Jesus by means of self-serving criteria. Not infrequently, those words of Jesus deemed offensive are judged "inauthentic," and thus, unauthoritative.

The sayings which make the cut are then set in opposition to the clear testimony of the entire Scriptures, including the full biblical testimony to Jesus. In addition, since Jesus in the gospels never explicitly mentions homosexual behavior, some argue that he did not consider it sinful. This reasoning is then used to trump the unmistakable prohibitions of Paul and the Old Testament. The revised wording of Amendment B would allow just this strategy. Amendment B also instructs church officers to strive to live lives "in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church." The revision calls on them to "be instructed by" those standards. The chasm of meaning between *conformity* and *being instructed by* is yawning indeed. To be instructed by something, one need only to have learned of it. This implies nothing whatever about agreement or conformity to it. One may have been instructed by Hitler's *Mein Kampf* or Stalin's purges (perhaps by concluding that they were both wicked political programs). More to the point, Nietzsche, Pol Pot and Marx may have been "instructed" by the Bible by concluding that humans have a penchant for illusion. Such instruction would hardly amount to commitment to its truth. The result of allowing this revision to Amendment B will be to sever any substantive *commitment and agreement* by church officers to Reformed confessional standards, which is the point at issue in Amendment B.

More specifically, with respect to the sexual behavior of leaders, Amendment B requires them to live "in fidelity within the covenant of marriage of a man and a woman or chastity in singleness." This is so modest and inoffensive from a biblical perspective, that any proposed revision to this wording should itself be enough to evoke suspicion. And the specific wording of the revision does justify that suspicion. The revision recommends that church leaders "demonstrate fidelity and integrity in marriage or singleness and in all relationships of life." Hmmm. Who could object to that? Out of context, this sounds appropriate. However, as a *replacement* for the document we already have in the Book of Order, this revision is a paradigm for meaningless bureaucratic prose. It fails to define the crucial words "fidelity" and "integrity." Without specific definitions, the statement is susceptible to a host of divergent "interpretations." More importantly, such vagueness effectively *guts* the intentions which inspired the original wording of those who formulated and ratified Amendment B. Notice, for example, that homosexual "marriage" and

polygamy could be deemed consistent with this new statement. Those who seek to preserve those intentions must fight in the presbyteries to prevent the ratification of the revisions.

Whether we like it or not, we stand at a crossroads. We do not have before us the option of an easy going "live and let live" libertarianism. Many are proclaiming "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. The explicit testimony of the revision's advocates betray it as an attempt to lift the church's prohibition against the ordination of self-affirming, unrepentant homosexuals. That same testimony demonstrates that many opponents of Amendment B judge the advocates of the amendment both immoral and intolerable (see the July-August issue of *The Presbyterian Layman*, vol. 30, no. 4 for details and documentation). For the church to ignore such testimony, in the hope of ushering in some pie-in-the-sky era of tolerance, would be self-deceiving. We have a dilemma of two mutually exclusive alternatives which the proposed revisions obscure. We must decide if we as a church will continue to call conduct such as sex with members of the same sex "sin," or will now resolve to call such behavior a "right" which should be heartily endorsed by God and his earthly representatives. And if we proclaim it a God-given right, would we not call bigots those who continue to declare such behavior sin, and would we not ultimately refuse them ordination into the church? By rejecting one option, we will choose the other.

It is hardly a coincidence that this clamor for sexual

"openness" for the church's leaders mirrors the growing tendency in our society to deny the normativity of heterosexual monogamy. The replacement of the original Fidelity and Chastity Amendment will not counter this tendency. Rather, it will hasten the PCUSA's assimilation into that part of her host culture. This move may be concealed by the fact that opponents of Amendment B have claimed for themselves the supposedly "counter-cultural" mantle of the prophets of old—by opposing putatively "oppressive" traditional mores—as if Isaiah and Jeremiah consulted the pagan pop culture of the Babylonians.

The church is growing weary of this debate. Some may ask understandably: "Why the continued call for revisions when the church has spoken with respect to Amendment B?" Unfortunately Amendment B's opponents have discovered the truth that institutional reorientation is best effected incrementally. And if they deconstruct the tradition and derogate its defenders long enough, they will likely succeed in altering the character of the church (or that small branch which is the PCUSA). By continuing to participate in endless discussion, well-meaning Presbyterians risk being a party to this shift. In healthy institutions everything cannot forever be a negotiable point of contention. Part of discernment consists in recognizing when to end debate and disputation, and to begin resistance and resolve. That time has come.

PTR

Fall Semester 1997

Charles Hodge Society

Apologetics Seminars

"Christianity Addresses the Isms"

The Charles Hodge Society's Fall Apologetics Seminars are an attempt to present and discuss crucial, pertinent issues relating to Christianity today. Speakers will strive to draw out the implications of the Christian world view vis-à-vis contemporary concerns. Each presentation will be followed with a time for discussion and debate.

Presentations will be held Wednesday nights from 8:30 to 9:30 PM (starting promptly) in Stuart Hall, room 3 (at Alexander Road and Dickinson Street at Princeton Theological Seminary).

Topics for the Semester's Seminars:

<i>Individualism</i>	Dr. Max L. Stackhouse	October 15
<i>Hodgism</i>	Dr. Mark A. Noll	October 22 (12:30 Main Lounge)
<i>Pentecostalism</i>	Carmen Aiken	October 22
<i>Pluralism</i>	Cliff Anderson	November 12
<i>Triumphalism</i>	Dr. Sam Moffett	November 19
<i>Pacifism</i>	Dr. Ulrich Mauser	December 10

For more information please call Darren Kennedy 987-0096.

When the Jesus Seminar Meets Jesus Under Fire: On Whose Side Does History Fall?

DARRELL L. BOCK

The Jesus Seminar in Context

Anyone familiar with Jesus Studies knows that there has been a major resurgence in interest. To use a secular expression: "business is up." The days of the Bultmannian view that there is little that we can know or say about Jesus are long gone.¹ So convinced was he of the supposed fact that we could know little about Jesus that his *Theology of the New Testament* discussed the theology of Jesus in thirty pages out of over six hundred.² His students became so disenchanted with this approach that Ernst Käsemann launched the second quest for the historical Jesus, which was rapidly followed and paralleled by a third.

The first quest is dated from Reimarus' *Fragments* in 1778 to Albert Schweitzer's *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*, written in 1906. Schweitzer pronounced the first quest (a skeptical one that desired to sever the history of Jesus from dogmatic considerations) a failure. He argued that Jesus needed to be relocated within first century Judaism and especially within apocalyptic.

The second quest started with Käsemann's now famous 1953 address, "The Problem of the Historical Jesus."³ The second quest still continues today, often fueled by the

assumptions of source, form, redaction, and tradition criticism and especially a belief that Mark tells us more about the early church than it does about Jesus, much along the line William Wrede laid out in 1901 in *The Messianic Secret*.⁴

The third quest argues that a portrait of Jesus as it historically fits into first century Judaism can be defended. The third quest does not ignore the source, form, redactional, and tradition critical tools; but it has asked hard questions about how and when they should be applied to this discussion. It has also stressed that the sayings of Jesus need to be placed in a historical context and assessed in that context rather than in a piecemeal, atomized fashion. Thus the third quest has highlighted the events and actions of Jesus as much as the sayings material, while asking what light might be shed by considering how the event and saying interact with one another. This third quest did not begin with a single work that launched it, as much as it emerged suddenly on three continents in the mid-sixties to seventies.⁵ Where the second quest argues that the portrait of Jesus is mostly a theological overlay of the early church, the third argues that there is much in the gospels that tells us about

Darrell L. Bock is Research Professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary.

¹In 1926 Bultmann wrote, "I do indeed think that we can know almost nothing concerning the life and personality of Jesus." *Jesus and the Word* (New York: Scribners, 1958 ed.), 8. In citing German works, I name English editions rather than the originals to make the argument accessible to those who do not work with German.

²Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Scribner's, 1951), 3-32. To say thirty pages is generous. The last six pages explain why Bultmann thinks that Jesus did not make messianic claims. He ties three themes to Jesus: 1) an announcement of the kingdom of God's coming with a call for readiness to God's demand before the End, 2) a protest against Jewish legalism, and 3) his declaration of the nearness of God in demand and forgiveness which places individuals at the brink of the End.

³E. Käsemann, *Essays on New Testament Themes* (London: SCM, 1964 ed.), 15-47.

⁴W. Wrede, *The Messianic Secret* (Greenwood S.C.: Attic Press, 1971 ed.).

⁵In Germany, Otto Betz, *What Do We Know about Jesus?* (London: SCM, 1968 trans. of 1965 ed.) and Martin Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers* (New York: Crossroad, 1981 trans. of 1968 ed.) emphasize Jewish backgrounds in the study of Jesus, an approach with a rich German heritage dating back to Adolf Schlatter, Joachim Jeremias, and Otto Michel. In Britain, S. G. F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots: A Study of the Political Factor in Primitive Christianity* (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1967) and the Jewish scholar, Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* (London: Collins, 1973) launched the discussion. In North America, Ben Meyer's *The Aims of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1979) laid important methodological ground. Meyer called his approach "critical realism" in contrast to more radically critical approaches. Major third questers today include Norman Wright, Bruce Chilton, Earle Ellis, Craig Evans and John Meier. The relative newness of the third quest means that it is only now getting the press it deserves.

what Jesus did and taught.⁶

Tom Wright speaks of a network of *autobahn*, which currently carries the Jesus Study traffic.⁷ The second quest runs on the *Wredebahn* and is marked by thoroughgoing skepticism, while the third travels the *Schweitzerbahn*, and is often marked by a thoroughgoing eschatology, rooted in first century Jewish apocalyptic. In the midst of the frantic activity of the two quests, we now possess multiple competing portraits of Jesus which picture him from a full blown revolutionary, to a Cynic-like figure, to a reforming teacher of Judaism, to a prophet, to a restorer/reformer of Israel, and to a messianic claimant.⁸

It is into this interstate system with its multiple options that the Jesus Seminar appeared in the mid-eighties and emerged full fledged with its highly visible publication of *The Five Gospels* in 1993.⁹ It argued that a representative committee of New Testament scholars had come together to determine what Jesus actually did say, rating each saying in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Thomas according to a now famous authenticity color code.¹⁰ Red means Jesus said exactly what the Gospels say he said (at least that the Greek reflects something pretty close to what originally would have been said in Aramaic). Pink indicates he said something very close to that. Grey means the words were that of the evangelist, but that it might have roots in Jesus' teaching. Black means the saying had no connection to Jesus at all; they were simply the words and theology of the early church.

The results are also well known. Only eighteen percent of the sayings received a red or pink rating. Approximately fifty percent were rated black. In stating their own conclusion, the Seminar argued that eighty two percent of the words attributed to Jesus do not come from him.¹¹ Other conclusions about Jesus argued that he was not interested in

eschatology or judgment (placing the seminar on the *Wredebahn*), that he was largely a teacher of aphorisms and parables, and that he is best characterized as a laconic sage.¹² Much of what the church (and the gospels) say about Jesus is the early church's work, not from Jesus himself.

An evangelical response to which I contributed followed two years later.¹³ I argued, with the Seminar, that orality was a factor that must be taken seriously in the gospel tradition's development, but that it must be examined alongside the Jewish handling of tradition. In other words, the gospels and the "historical Jesus question" must be placed in a historical context. Jewish culture has a history of transmitting tradition. We see it in the care with which the Hebrew scriptures were copied, as Qumran has so vividly shown us. We see it in the long liturgical prayers, like the *Eighteen Benedictions*, which Jews memorized. Philo discusses it in his *Embassy to Gaius* 210, where he discusses how Jews guard their laws and customs. This background shows that it is fair to characterize Jewish culture as a "culture of memory."¹⁴ They knew how to pass on tradition with care.

I then defended a distinction in assessing the sayings material and assessing their historical value, while discussing how one works with history and historical perspective. The distinction I made was between the *ipsissima verba* ("the very words") of Jesus and the *ipsissima vox* ("the very voice of Jesus"). This distinction, by the way, is not the creation of fundamentalist scholars. Its roots lie in the work of Joachim Jeremias, who knew about as much about first century Judaism, Aramaic, and

⁶N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 3-124.

⁷Wright actually develops a metaphor originated by Norman Perrin. Wright also notes that some individuals travel on both routes, so the categorization is not always airtight.

⁸For a review of these various options, see B. Witherington III, *The Jesus Quest* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995).

⁹Robert Funk, Roy Hoover and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (New York: Polebridge, 1993).

¹⁰Richard Hays, "The Corrected Jesus," *First Things* 43 (May, 1994):43-48 questions how representative the seminar is on p. 47, "Not one member of the New Testament faculty from Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Duke, University of Chicago, Union Theological Seminary, Vanderbilt, SMU, or Catholic University is involved in this project. It probably goes without saying that the faculties of evangelical seminaries are not represented here." I know that only a handful of evangelicals participated at all. The point is that despite the Seminar's open invitation for participants, the groups' actual makeup is quite selective with graduates of Harvard and Claremont predominating. The claim to be representative is questionable.

¹¹*The Five Gospels*, p. 5.

¹²All of this appears in the introduction to the *Five Gospels*, pp. 1-37, which presents their rules of evidence, including seven pillars which I have assessed elsewhere (*Luke 9:51-24:53*. BECNT vol. 3b [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996], 1961-66). They also explain their view of the rules of oral evidence. These rules cite no ancient parallels beyond a reference to Thucydides (460-400 BCE), *History of the Peloponnesian War* 1.22.1 (431-404 BCE). The judgments they make about Jesus' style of teaching and themes show that the rules were determined ahead of time by a series of judgments one can question. In fact, even the way they appeal to Thucydides as evidencing a loose use of oral tradition can be challenged as the work of the classical scholar Charles Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 143-68 shows. Fornara's work is important because he is not discussing the biblical texts or issues at all, but speaks strictly as a classicist about ancient historiography.

¹³Michael J. Wilkins, J. P. Moreland, *Jesus Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents the Historical Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995). My essay was, "The Words of Jesus in the Gospels: Live, Jive, or Memorex?"

¹⁴So correctly, R. Riesner, "Jesus as Preacher and Teacher," *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition*, JSNTMS 64, ed. Henry Wansbrough (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 185-210. For a discussion of the flexibility of the wording of Jesus' sayings considered against the background of cultures of orality, see C. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 28-31.

orality as anyone in his day.¹⁵ My major point was that the gospels give us the voice of Jesus, even when they do not give us his words, and that this voice also gives us access to the historical Jesus. In fact, I argued that the gospels do *not* always give us his words and often summarize in a way that gives us the gist of his teaching.

My charge was that the Seminar exhibited historical naiveté in failing to do serious work with either the nature of Jewish ancient culture or with the complexities of doing historical work with ancient sources. These flaws rendered the seminar's results questionable, especially their conclusion that over half of the gospel material has no connection to Jesus. As an evangelical, I was *not* arguing that everything in the gospels be printed in red. In fact a major burden of my article was to argue everything *cannot* be put in red.¹⁶ Rather I argued that a close look at the gospel tradition and its wording (and I considered numerous examples) shows that the voice/words distinction is an important consideration when discussing the historical Jesus. It is a category the seminar seems to underplay, especially when it works with those sayings colored in grey.¹⁷

Since my article in *Jesus Under Fire*, I have also written a two volume commentary on Luke.¹⁸ In it I have examined the Seminar's work on the Lucan sayings pericope by pericope. Their assessment of the Lucan material rendered the sayings with the distribution of 4% red, 23% pink, 22% grey, and 51% black—percentages pretty similar to the other synoptic gospels. The commentary closed with an excursus on the Jesus Seminar's work in Luke, where I assessed their seven pillars, and the major issues hidden within them. For example, pillar 5 states that the noneschatological Jesus of aphorisms and parables should be separated from the eschatological Jesus.¹⁹ This premise is decidedly *not* a received premise of New Testament gospel study, and to argue that it is distorts the history of Jesus studies. The effect of this premise alone is that all the gospels' teaching

on judgment or any elements that parallel the prophet's call to renewal based upon the hope of God's ultimate saving work are erased from the lips of Jesus by *a priori* definition. I concluded, "The pillars function like a tightly knit strainer that allows little to get through the process of assessment. If we treated other ancient works with similar standards, there would be little we could say about ancient history."²⁰

So why this essay? Roy Hoover, an editor of *the Five Gospels*, wrote a review of *Jesus Under Fire*.²¹ It treats only my essay since it stands at the center of this debate over authenticity and Jesus. My goal is to summarize his review and then assess it through the eyes of one evangelical New Testament person in the middle of the discussion.

Hoover's Review of *Jesus Under Fire*

The best way to present Hoover's remarks is to have him speak for himself. On my attempt to distinguish the "voice" as reflected in the gospel writers' summaries of Jesus' teaching, Hoover says,

The difference between Professor Bock's conception of what the search for the historical Jesus is about and that of most critical scholars, including the Fellows of the Jesus Seminar, is apparent in his definition of Jesus' "voice." It would be more historically accurate to call what Bock calls the "voice" of Jesus, the "voice" of the early church. It is in the early church's formulations of their faith that Bock finds the full meaning of what Jesus taught, not in a recovery of what Jesus said on his own. That Jesus meant "more" than he actually said is what his followers grasped after Easter, and this "more" is what Bock takes to be Jesus' authentic "voice." Historically viewed, what Bock claims is Jesus' "voice" is actually early Christian interpretation [*sic*].

When members of the Jesus Seminar refer to Jesus' "voice," they refer to the characteristic stance and style of Jesus' teaching before Easter, not to the retrospective theological meaning conferred upon Jesus' life and teaching by his followers after Easter. Bock's definition of Jesus' "voice" refers to the early history of Christian thought, rather than to a search for the historical Jesus. His paramount interest, it seems clear, is Jesus' life's meaning, not his life history. Jesus does not speak for himself in Bock's treatment of his teaching; the Gospel authors speak for him. They are the ones who most adequately know what Jesus meant.

Noting that all my examples in the *Jesus Under Fire* isolated confessional examples, he says,

These are the sayings that matter, in Bock's view; even though parables and aphorisms constitute about seventy percent of the content of sayings attributed to Jesus in the Gospels, according to one recently published

¹⁵J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (New York: Scribners, 1971), 1-37. In contrast to Bultmann's thirty pages, Jeremias spends three hundred pages on the teaching of Jesus.

¹⁶This point is clearly noted in a review by Dick France of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, in *JETS* 39 (1996): 689. In fact, I would argue that even grey categories can tell us something about the historical Jesus.

¹⁷Others have commented in full about how the manner of voting in the seminar skewed the results toward grey and black. See the critiques of B. Witherington III, *The Jesus Quest* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 45-46, and Luke T. Johnson, *The Real Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996) 21-22. In fact, a Seminar member told me that each saying started out black and had to be argued up the color scale toward authenticity. Again the rules helped to determine the result. If better voting methods were chosen and a different approach to ancient oral culture and history, the results might look very different.

¹⁸*Luke 1:1-9:50 and Luke 9:51-24:53* BECNT, vols. 3a, b (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994, 1996).

¹⁹Note how obviously the *Wredebahn* is asserted here as a given!

²⁰*Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1964-65.

²¹*The Journal for Higher Criticism* 3 (1996): 310-15, produced at Drew University.

estimate, not one of them is mentioned in this discussion of his words. In *The Five Gospels* the first two of the sayings Bock chooses to support his claims are not color-coded at all by the Jesus Seminar, since they are not sayings attributed to Jesus; the third is colored black, because the Seminar regarded it as almost certainly the creation of the Gospel authors, not a saying of the historical Jesus. It seems likely, on the other hand, that Professor Bock would have colored each of his three choices red, since they express what he believes is the truth about the historical Jesus.²²

On my motive in writing he declares,

What, in their view, the Jesus Seminar denies—"the biblical portrait of Jesus found in the New Testament" (p. 3)—they want to defend. Their intention, in other words, is to defend the reliability of the Gospels as authoritative scriptures, not examine them as sources in which one may find historical evidence.²³

Finally, in looking at my critique of the Seminar's use of the criteria of authenticity, he gets to his central observation and complaint,

Professor Bock's discussion of the criteria of authenticity ignores the fresh and nuanced presentation of these in the introduction to *The Five Gospels* as "rules of evidence," and resorts to older definitions of three criteria—dissimilarity, multiple attestation, and coherence. He claims that the Seminar both misconstrues these, as he defines [*sic*] them, and fails to use them consistently. Professor Bock's discussion of the criteria of historical authenticity seems to me to be untouched by historical consciousness. Son of Man christology together with the idea of Jesus' death as a sacrifice for sin and a ransom for many is the ruling criterion of authenticity for him. Historical matters are

merely aids to the vindication of this messianic and redemptive meaning. With history thus safely subordinated to theology, it is easy for Professor Bock to see these theological themes as authentic elements of the teaching of the Jesus of history, and easy also for him to see flaws in the Jesus Seminar's methodology and assessments.

Bock's discussion of the criteria of authenticity shows that what really is at issue between him (and his colleagues) and the Fellows of the Jesus Seminar is not likely to be clarified by a debate about criteria. At bottom, what distinguishes the scholars of the Jesus Seminar from the scholars who have contributed to *Jesus Under Fire* is not so much different judgments about the criteria of authenticity (or "rules of evidence"), as a different conception of the meaning of authenticity. That is, what distinguishes the two books is the difference, as Van A. Harvey characterized it thirty years ago, between a devotion to the ethic of religious belief and the authority of tradition, on the one hand, and a commitment to the ethic of critical judgment and historical knowledge, on the other. Within these ethical universes both the role of the historian and the nature of historical evidence are understood differently . . .

From the perspective of a scholar who is committed to the ethic of critical judgment and historical knowledge, Professor Bock's discussion of the authentic words of Jesus is the work of a scholar who has abdicated his role as critical historian in order to mediate a traditional form of belief. What we see in his treatment of Jesus' sayings is not reason in search of historical truth, but reason claiming historical support for religious belief.

So Hoover responds. *Jesus Seminar* meets *Jesus Under Fire*. The assessment is that faith ignores history. Critical judgment and historical knowledge (read white hats) have come against religious belief and tradition (read black hats). In defending the faith, Hoover claims, history is not served. Is that the case?

Assessing Hoover's Argument

I take Hoover's arguments in reverse order. My work in evaluating the Seminar has not ignored the "fresh and nuanced presentation" of criteria. I questioned, as would most New Testament scholars, the excessively early date the Seminar gave to the Gospel of Thomas (my pp. 89-90). Richard Hays of Duke calls this "a shaky element in their methodological foundation."²⁴ This Thomas element is part of the historical reason the Seminar appeals to an aphoristic

²²I used the voice at the baptism, Peter's confession of Jesus at Caesarea Philippi, and Jesus' reply to the High Priest. I selected these to show that the same principles of recording apply to gospel discourse material, even when the speaker is not Jesus, a point I noted in the essay (note my p. 86). I also argued quite clearly that there is difference of wording within the parallels, so that a rating of red, if such sayings had been included, would *not* be appropriate here in some of the wording. Thus, my point was to illustrate the slight variations that do exist between recorded sayings, but *not* in ways that undercut the fundamental point of what was said by Jesus. He also fails to note the saying example I used from Luke 5:33-39 to show inconsistency in the Seminar's using the critical principle of dissimilarity. This Luke 5 passage represented one of the aphorisms he said that he wished I would have considered. Apparently, he missed it. Finally, I highlighted confessional statements, because here is where the differences are most evident. I regard his complaint as a misrepresentation of my argument (a misguided attempt to construe motive), which is why I note it here, and not in the later response on substantive issues.

²³The reference to p. 3 is to the introductory essay in *Jesus Under Fire*.

²⁴"The Corrected Jesus," *First Things* 43 (May, 1994): 44-45. See Robert Grant and David Noel Freedman, *The Secret Sayings of Jesus* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1993 reprinting of 1960 ed). These two expert historians of first century Palestine analyze this gospel in detail and describe it on p. 20 as "our most significant witness to the early perversion of Christianity by those who wanted to create Jesus in their own image."

Jesus. However, why should we ignore the general portrait of the equally early, if not earlier, Mark (or the preponderance of the rest of the ancient gospel evidence) that indicates Jesus addressed people in more than simple proverbs? And considering Jesus' considerable reputation as a teacher-prophet, which virtually no one disputes, should we posit as a basic rule the idea that the only thing people remembered and passed on from Jesus were single sentences? Is it historically sensitive (or practically credible, for that matter) that a great teacher would only be remembered for his one-liners? Even the rabbinic tradition of Jewish culture knows of the recording of rabbinic parables and other pieces of discourse material.²⁵

The other observation to make about Hoover's complaint here is the almost automatic disjunction he places between the presence of christological teaching and the possibility of real history. If a saying is christological, like the ransom or Son of Man saying, then it must *not* be authentic. Who is operating from a faith position here? When I cited the Son of Man saying or the ransom saying, I noted their authenticity was debated and then I proceeded to argue, based on the criteria of the Seminar, that dissimilarity was for the authenticity of the Son of Man saying; and that

Considering Jesus' considerable reputation as a teacher-prophet, which virtually no one disputes, should we posit as a basic rule the idea that the only thing people remembered and passed on from Jesus were single sentences? Even the rabbinic tradition of Jewish culture knows of the recording of rabbinic parables and other pieces of discourse material.

one could make a case on the grounds of multiple attestation for the ransom saying. Faith did not assume the saying was true. I attempted to argue for the saying's credibility on the basis of rules set up by the Seminar. The fact that such sayings could get through the strainer was significant. When Hoover refers to the "more nuanced" use of the criteria, he is appealing to additional, and in some cases, more idiosyncratic criteria (like pillar 5—the noneschatological Jesus), perhaps so that these kind of confessional statements do not make it through. But as I noted above, this is fixing the game's rules so the outcome is determined before the game is played. There is no history in this approach, only an excessively critical kind of criticism.

²⁵For an important summary of the impact of the study of Jewish forms on the structure of gospel materials, see E. Earle Ellis, "The Historical Jesus and the Gospels," *Evangelium-Schriftauslegung-Kirche* ed. O. Hofius (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr-Siebeck, 1997), 94-106, esp. 101-04.

As a test I took a key cluster of sayings which are considered to be among the most authentic Jesus spoke, namely, the synoptic kingdom of God sayings.²⁶ They distribute as follows: triple tradition, 21x; Mt/Mk, 6x, Mt/Lk 17x; Mt only, 22x; Mk only 2x, Lk only, 9x, a total of 77 sayings units. In this key area where the likelihood thematically of authenticity is strong according to many in Jesus studies, the seminar's numbers came out as 32.5 sayings in black (42%), 19 in grey (25%), 21.5 in pink (28%), and 4 in red (5%). These numbers are only slightly better than the Seminar's general average evaluations with only one third of the sayings having a good claim to authenticity, while two thirds remain very suspect.²⁷ Even when one gives the benefit of the doubt and counts only sayings attested in more than one gospel, of which there are 44, the numbers show a low percentage of authenticity: 15.5 in black (35%); 11 in grey (25%), 14.5 in pink (33%), and 3 in red (7%). Under these special conditions, though the relative weight of authentic material doubles compared to Seminar averages for Jesus sayings considered as a whole, there is still an overwhelming amount of inauthentic material for what is perhaps the major theme of Jesus.²⁸ It is these kinds of specific results that raise questions about the Seminar's method.

As to whether I seek to defend the faith, I must come clean. I do, but it is because I have come to believe the faith is historically defensible as a historian, not because of some pre-ordained position of faith. I cannot prove every detail happened as a historian, but I believe a general portrait of Jesus' ministry can emerge from the gospels which explains why he was crucified and why a church was formed. My study in the gospels tells me these documents reflect good ancient historiography. I believe the gospels give us a solid glimpse of the real Jesus and that the Seminar's Jesus is historically incredible, for their Jesus would never have done enough to get the Jewish leadership and Rome to consider him enough of a threat to be worthy of crucifixion.

Finally, what of the "voice" issue? Is the voice Jesus' or the church's? Again it should be noted that Hoover's approach to this question assumes an either/or choice. His position seems to be, if it is the early church's words, then it is the early church's voice and *not* the voice of Jesus. Note the significant option that has been excluded *a priori*: there is no category to consider whether the early church has summarized Jesus' teaching in words that their context can better appreciate (usually a more Greco-Roman one for

²⁶I used the concordance listing of N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1996), 663-66. I only counted those texts where Jesus spoke and the Seminar colored the saying. Split coloring led to a halved count. I did not count Luke 22:29-30 as a Mark-Luke parallel, since it appears in the Luke only list, which is where it belongs. Percentages that follow were rounded off.

²⁷Remember for all sayings of Jesus, the aggregate for red and pink readings was 18%, while for Luke it was 27%. The major movement in this case is that a few more sayings show up as pink rather than grey or black.

²⁸This test also shows how hard it is for singly attested sayings to get through the criteria.

books like Luke and Mark) and yet in a way that still reflects Jesus' voice. This option, it seems, is excluded by definition. Does this exclusion really honor the ethic of critical judgment and historical knowledge Hoover claims to uphold? It seems, rather, to ignore a historical possibility. Who is the traditionalist in this approach? One might argue that a critical tradition is being recited like a mantra: the gospels are the product of the early church (the second or third *Sitzen im Leben*) without ties or connection to Jesus (the first *Sitz im Leben*). The very point of my original essay and its historical appeal to orality in Jewish culture was to argue that early church wording does not automatically exclude connection to Jesus. Hoover's either/or is, for me, a both/and. My sense is that much gospel material, far more than the Seminar suggests, has this dual character.

The gospels themselves argue that the disciples did not understand all that Jesus said or did. They candidly admit, even embarrassingly so in some accounts, that later events helped them see what he was about and what he meant. This duality means that a gospel writer has the choice in telling his story historically of either telling us 1) what was meant and perceived to be meant at the time of the utterance, 2) what they came to see it meant as a result of later events or 3) to so mix the two that the ambiguity of expression might allow the word play to continue to function in the account. Hoover takes seriously none of these historical complexities.

Take, for example, a term like son of God.²⁹ This term might conceal a mere elective relationship to God and not be a unique confessional term at all. It could refer to a regal, messianic figure. In the later church, it takes on even more exalted significance. But what happens if the appreciation for a term like this grew as Jesus' ministry proceeded? I find this quite historically likely. When Peter confesses Jesus at Caesarea Philippi, I do not think he was thinking yet about Jesus as the ontological second person of the Trinity. He simply was acknowledging his view that Jesus was more than a prophet and the one through whom God was working to bring the realization of Israel's promise. When the later church attaches a more exalted sense to the term (in light of, I might add, really unique events), it can be seen as a proper extension of the original meaning in light of the vindication they argued had taken place. As I argued in the earlier essay, some elements of history are retrospective *and yet still historically connected* to an original utterance.³⁰ A reading of Peter's confession can exist which is historically

sensitive to both the original setting of the historical Jesus *and* to the later understanding of the church's confession of Jesus. I am defending the premise that, *it is more historically sensitive to appreciate this nuancing, work with it as a possibility, and look for this possible kind of linkage than to define it out of existence a priori before one pursues the discussion of the texts.* It takes a genuinely critical reading to see the texts and history this way. Both Hoover's oversimplified portrayal of my position and the position he defends seem to me to be excessively one dimensional, and thus historically uncritical. On one thing we agree, our two approaches appear to possess an inherent impasse.

When all is said and done, one must explain historically 1) the phenomena of Jesus' death as a regal or promise claimant, 2) the portrayal of the disciples as having stumbled their way through understanding Jesus during his ministry, and 3) their resilient death defying faith after he died.

These three points are historical lodestones, whose likelihood can be easily established. Only the most skeptical doubt Jesus was crucified. Crucifixion must have been through Rome for some social reason. Something of social significance led the Jewish leadership to ask Rome to execute him. The tradition which locates the cross's *titulus* as involving a messianic claim would be careless folly in a gospel written for Rome unless it had some base, as it would only give Rome more cause to consider persecuting Christians in a time when they were under pressure already. It must be noted, because it was true. It took courage for Mark to present this detail.

Similarly, the embarrassment of the stumbling portrayal of the disciples during Jesus' ministry in Mark has a ring of credibility about it, since most burgeoning movements do not seek to "trash" their current top leadership without a compelling reason. The reason, of course, is that it reflects the truth. (The fact that the other gospels often soften this note show its likely credibility.)

Finally, ancient testimony is full of the recognition that the early church had many heroic martyrs.

So we are left with two options, namely, the ones I noted to begin this essay. The first is that the early church made something out of Jesus that was never there in his ministry (the *Wredebahn*). The second is that Jesus made assertions about deliverance, promise and vindication which fit into the first century Jewish setting, that challenged that setting enough to lead to his death, and that gave the disciples hope when the tomb showed up empty. I believe the second option is the more likely explanation, and that for this reason the third quest, for all its varied expressions, has much promise in helping us understand the historical Jesus. In part for these historical reasons, I believe a more credible case can be made for Jesus from the premises argued for in *Jesus Under Fire* than can be made from the Jesus of the Jesus Seminar. It is possible to be critical in a historically sensitive way, have faith, and make a strong case for our access to Jesus. History stands on the side of the gospels' credible presentation of Jesus.

PTR

²⁹Again I choose a "confessional" term, not because I have a confessional, christological faith commitment to prove, but because it is the best kind of illustration of the problem, namely, the term might not have been confessional or as confessionally exalted in its original context (or at least it may not have been perceived that way) as it came to be. The historical complexity is present and exploited in the ambiguity. I think Son of Man functions similarly.

³⁰It is the italicized portion of this sentence which Hoover wishes to define as out of bounds at the start, but in a way that short-circuits the full historical reality of what could be taking place in the gospel tradition. These points need to be argued through careful study, not *a priori* defined out of existence.

Hodge and Warfield on Darwinism

ADAM NEDER

What is Darwinism? It is Atheism.

CHARLES HODGE, 1874¹

We raise no question as to the compatibility of the Darwinian form of the hypothesis of evolution with Christianity.

BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, 1888²

The history of Charles Darwin's early life has become familiar almost to the point of cliché. The years of strained relationship with his father, an initial preparation for ministry, the voyage on the *Beagle* and his observations in the Galapagos Islands are all endowed with even more drama when, near the end of his writing, Darwin made a frantic rush to publish his *Origin of Species*.³ He feared that Alfred Russell Wallace had discovered a similar theory, and Darwin, aware of the significance of his own work, wanted his book to be first off the presses. Its reception was even greater than Darwin himself could have imagined. As one scholar of this issue has recently remarked, "Darwin's book struck the match that started the whole field of knowledge blazing like wildfire."⁴ Indeed it is remarkable to note the speed with

which Darwin's work took hold among scientists, and their eager reception of his work attests to the lack of a generally accepted scientific theory concerning the history of life on earth.⁵ However, while the ideas in *Origin* were quickly adopted by the larger scientific community, much of the theological community was decidedly slower in its assessment of the importance of Darwin's work. In fact it was not until three years after the publication of *Origin* that Charles Hodge, who later became a leading anti-Darwinian theologian, made any published judgment concerning Darwin's theory—and even then only in a footnote.⁶ It seems that Hodge initially regarded Darwin's work as spurious science—overly speculative and divorced from the "facts." He and other theologians regarded "absurd" the idea that advanced forms of life evolved from less complex ones. Hodge writes, "it shocks the common sense of unsophisticated men to be told that the whale and the hummingbird, man and the mosquito, are derived from the same source."⁷ However, as time passed and it became clear that the scientific community was not willing to dismiss Darwin's work, theologians were forced to wrestle with these ideas and offer a more serious assessment of them.⁸

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¹Charles Hodge, *What Is Darwinism?* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, & Co., 1874), 176-77.

²Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield, "Charles Darwin's Religious Life: A Sketch in Spiritual Biography," in *Studies in Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1932), 548. Originally printed in *The Presbyterian Review*, 9 (1888): 569-601.

³Charles Darwin, *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection; or, The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, 6th ed. (London: John Murray, 1872).

⁴Bradley John Gundlach, "The Evolution Question at Princeton, 1845-1929" (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1995), 39. One should not make the mistake, however, of regarding Darwin's ideas as originating *de novo*. The ideas of development have a history that dates back at least as far as Aristotle, and Darwin was certainly aware of these. He also drew on the scientific work of many of his contemporaries, including Lyell, Malthus and others, in formulating his ideas. Darwin's unique contribution was to offer a scientific mechanism for

development—natural selection.

⁵Jon Roberts, *Darwinism and the Divine in America: Protestant Intellectuals and Organic Evolution, 1859-1900* (Madison: U. Wisconsin Press, 1988), 86. Here Roberts argues that, "In the fifteen years following the publication of the *Origin of Species*, a revolution in the field of natural history had occurred."

⁶Charles Hodge, "Diversity of Species in the Human Race," *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 34 (1862): 461 note. For a biography of Hodge see, Archibald Alexander Hodge, *The Life of Charles Hodge* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1880).

⁷Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977 rpt.), 2: 14.

⁸It must be made clear that many American theologians, especially those of a more progressive bent, took evolutionary ideas very seriously. Lyman Abbott, Newman Smyth and many others made use of evolutionary ideas while doing theology. Furthermore, progressive theologians were not the only ones paying attention. The conservative Scottish scholar and president of The College of New Jersey James McCosh and the

The burden of this essay is to analyze and compare the thought of two important theologians, Charles Hodge and Benjamin B. Warfield, concerning the issue of Darwinism. These two Princeton theologians, while generally regarded as being in agreement in the majority of their theological assertions, are often thought to disagree in regards to Darwinism. However, my argument is that the responses of these two men to Darwinism, while they differ on the question of the likelihood of the occurrence of evolution, are fundamentally in agreement on all the other issues involved in the debate, and that much of their apparent disagreement hinges on the disparate definitions they assign to the term "Darwinism."⁹

Hodge

The first chapter of Hodge's three volume systematic theology is titled *Theology as a Science*. In it he outlines his theological method. An understanding of this chapter is essential to an understanding of why Hodge responds to Darwinism in the way that he does. As the title indicates, Hodge considered theology a science. God, he writes:

gives us in the Bible the truths which, properly understood and arranged, constitute the science of theology. As the facts of nature are all related and determined by physical laws, so the facts of the Bible are all related and determined by the nature of God and of his creatures . . . The Bible is to the theologian what nature is to the man of science. It is his store-house of facts; and his method of ascertaining what the Bible teaches, is the same as that which the natural philosopher adopts to ascertain what nature teaches.¹⁰

Like many theologians of his time, Hodge considered proper theological methodology to be one of induction. Describing his methodology, he writes, "it agrees in everything essential with the inductive method as applied to the natural sciences . . . the theologian must be guided by the same rules in the collection of facts, as govern the man of science."¹¹ Thus, it is clear that Hodge is not inimical to science. In fact, he considers his theology to be scientific. His underlying presupposition is that the book of nature and the book of Scripture will never contradict one another. As he writes, "All truth must be consistent. God cannot contra-

dict himself."¹² Since God is the creator and sustainer of the physical world and also the inspirer of the biblical texts, Scripture and science will always be in harmony with one another. When they appear to be in disharmony one has either done bad science or bad exegesis. This is Hodge's starting point—*a priori*.

Thus the method of the theologian and the natural scientist is the same. Both must patiently and painstakingly gather all relevant "facts," which as Hodge writes, "is not an easy work,"¹³ and only then begin deriving principles from those facts. Here Hodge stresses the point that one must not impress one's theory upon the facts, but rather one ought to take care to derive theory directly from fact. The scientist must never say more than the facts will allow, and must always guard against the twin evils of speculation and the importation of a preestablished philosophy to the data.¹⁴ This is an important point to keep in mind and will prove to be crucial when we turn to an examination of Hodge's critique of Darwinism.

Since Hodge held that science and theology never contradict one another, he therefore believed that if a particular scientific theory was securely established within the scientific community which contradicted one's interpretation of Scripture, then one was bound to rethink, and if necessary to change, the interpretation. As evidence of this occurring in the past, Hodge cited the case of the switch from a geocentric model of the solar system to a heliocentric one. In this case the church had changed its interpretation of Scripture in light of scientific discovery, while maintaining the full integrity of the Biblical texts. Presciently, however, Hodge remarked that, "Such change cannot be effected without a struggle."¹⁵ Nonetheless, at least theoretically, Hodge was open to an adaptation of theology in light of established scientific discovery.¹⁶ With this in mind, we are now ready

¹²Ibid., 1: 15.

¹³Ibid., 1: 11.

¹⁴At this point it is necessary to mention that while Hodge was very careful to point out what he considered to be alien philosophy in the work of others, he was reticent in admitting his own particular philosophical biases. Hodge was clearly dependent on many of the tenets of Scottish Common Sense Realism, such as the criterion of necessity and universality for the adoption of a belief prior to empirical observation, the unity of knowledge, and the value of intuitional knowledge. The influence of Scottish Common Sense Realism on Hodge and other theologians and scientists of this time is well documented. See e.g., Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *Protestants in an Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought* (Chapel Hill: U. North Carolina Press, 1977); Herbert Hovenkamp, *Science and Religion in America, 1800-1860* (Philadelphia: U. Pennsylvania Press, 1978); Deryl F. Johnson, "The Attitudes of the Princeton Theologians Toward Darwinism and Evolution from 1859-1929" (Ph.D. diss., U. of Iowa, 1968) 16ff.

¹⁵Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, I: 573.

¹⁶Hodge is here vulnerable to the charge that he is committing the fallacy of *a priorism*. Given his understanding

theologically orthodox Harvard scientist Asa Gray became leading advocates of Darwin in the United States.

⁹Bradley J. Gundlach, in his "The Evolution Question at Princeton, 1845-1929," finds much common ground between both Hodge and McCosh as well as Warfield and McCosh. So too do Mark Noll and David Livingstone in their excellent introduction to Charles Hodge, *What Is Darwinism? And Other Writings on Science and Religion*, ed. Mark Noll and David N. Livingstone (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994). However, my argument, except when noted, is not dependent on their work.

¹⁰Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 1: 3,10.

¹¹Ibid., 1: 9, 11.

to examine Hodge's response to Darwinism.

As I mentioned above, Hodge's initial reaction to Darwinism was dismissive due to what he considered its unwarranted speculation. However, as the scientific community continued to endorse Darwin's views, Hodge realized that a more detailed treatment of Darwinism was necessary. This he offered in the second volume of his *Systematic Theology* and subsequently *What Is Darwinism?*. It is crucial to my case to emphasize that Hodge is very precise about clarifying what he considered to be the decisive issues involved in the debate. In fact Hodge was at his best when analyzing the underlying presuppositions and implications of Darwin's theory. This is clear both in his treatment of these issues in his *Systematic Theology* and also in impromptu remarks that he made at the 1873 meeting of the Evangelical Alliance Conference in New York City, which shortly thereafter became the impetus for his decision to write *What Is Darwinism?*. Upon hearing a lecture in which he thought the terms of the debate were being obfuscated, Hodge rose and delivered these revealing remarks:

I don't stand here to make any speech at all. I rise simply to ask Dr. Brown one question. I want him to tell us what development is. That has not been done. The great question which divides theists from atheists—Christians from unbelievers—is this: Is development an intellectual process guided by God, or is it a blind process of unintelligible, unconscious force, which knows no end and adopts no means? . . . This is a vital question, sir. We cannot stand here and hear men talk about development, without telling us what development is.¹⁷

This quote is helpful in illustrating the importance Hodge placed on precise definition of terms.¹⁸ Since for the purposes of this essay it is essential to understand Hodge's definition of Darwinism, it is worth quoting him at some length on this point.

He writes:

From what has been said, it appears that Darwinism includes three distinct elements. First, evolution; or the

assumption that all organic forms, vegetable and animal, have been evolved or developed from one, or a few, primordial living germs; second, that this evolution has been effected by natural selection, or the survival of the fittest; and third, and by far the most important and only distinctive element of his theory, that this natural selection is without design, being conducted by unintelligent physical causes.¹⁹

Thus, Hodge regards evolution, natural selection and the denial of design as the three crucial ingredients of Darwin's theory. However, it is important to recognize that Hodge locates the denial of design as the essential feature of Darwinism. This is clear in the above quote when he regards the ateleological character of the theory as its "only distinct element," and furthermore when he writes, "This is the vital point. The denial of final causes is the formative idea of Darwin's theory, and therefore no teleologist can be a Darwinian."²⁰ Concerning design, Hodge writes that it is "the intelligent and voluntary selection of an end, and the intelligent and voluntary choice, application, and control of means appropriate to the accomplishment of that end. That design, therefore, implies intelligence is involved in its very nature."²¹ And it is precisely Darwin's rejection of design, which for Hodge implies the rejection of a designer, that prompts him to regard Darwinism as atheism. He writes, "We have thus arrived at the answer to our question, What Is Darwinism? It is Atheism . . . the exclusion of design from nature is, as Dr. Gray says, tantamount to atheism."²²

Notice, it is not the transmutation of species or evolution *per se* that Hodge rejects, but the denial of final causes. Hodge personally regarded it as unlikely that evolution actually happened, but he is not theoretically opposed to its having occurred. Furthermore, he acknowledges that evolution and theism are theoretically compatible. He writes, "there may be a theistic interpretation of the Darwinian theory." And further, "A man, therefore, may be an evolutionist, without being a Darwinian."²³ Thus it becomes clear why Hodge, in *What Is Darwinism?*, makes the seemingly strange argument that Asa Gray, a Christian and one of Darwin's leading proponents in the United States, was not a Darwinian. Hodge was again being characteristically careful with terms. While Gray considered himself a Darwinian and referred to himself as such, he erred, according to Hodge, in regarding Darwinism as compatible with design. Since for Hodge Darwinism was synonymous with ateleology it made no sense for Gray, a believer in design, to call himself a Darwinian. In Hodge's mind, Gray was an

that it is impossible for science and the Bible to contradict one another, there is no scientific evidence that can count against the truth claims of Scripture. Any evidence offered against a Biblical claim is not evidence against the truth of the Bible, but rather simply demonstrates that an interpretation of the Scriptures must be reconsidered. The Bible remains true no matter what scientific evidence is offered against it.

¹⁷Phillip Schaff and S. Iranæus Prime, eds., *History, Essays, Orations, and Other Documents of the Sixth General Council of the Evangelical Alliance Held in New York, October 2-12, 1873* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1874) 318.

¹⁸In support of this view, Noll and Livingstone remark in their introduction to *What Is Darwinism?*, "Hodge's project in *What Is Darwinism?* can appropriately be considered an extended exercise in definition." Charles Hodge, *What Is Darwinism?*, 34.

¹⁹Hodge, *What Is Darwinism?*, 48.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 175.

²¹Hodge, *What Is Darwinism?*, 167.

²²*Ibid.*, 176-177. However, as Deryl F. Johnson has shown in his "The Attitudes of the Princeton Theologians Toward Darwinism and Evolution from 1859-1929," 117. Hodge here only partially quotes Gray. Gray later goes on to say that Darwinism does not necessarily exclude all design.

²³Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2: 16; and *What Is Darwinism?*, 50-51.

evolutionist, not a Darwinian. But it is important to recognize that Hodge does not censure Gray for his belief in evolution. For Hodge, evolution does not necessarily contradict the truth of Christianity; however, the denial of design does. He remarks that it is the denial of design, not evolution, that is "the grand and fatal objection to Darwinism."²⁴ Thus, to reiterate, Hodge locates the heart of Darwinism in its denial of design and not in the idea of evolution. Having first arrived at Hodge's definition of Darwinism, we will now briefly turn to the scientific as well as theological arguments he employs against it.

While Hodge's primary concern was to attack what he considered to be the atheistic philosophy which underlaid Darwin's work, he nonetheless had objections to Darwin's science. As we have already seen, Hodge regarded the work of the theologian to be similar to that of the scientist. One must patiently gather all the relevant "facts" and only subsequently offer tentative theories concerning those facts. One must avoid at all costs the evil of imposing onto the data a hypothesis or philosophy that the data does not warrant. And it is precisely at this point that Hodge finds flaw with Darwin's science. In his judgment, Darwin's theory is wildly speculative and strays far beyond the facts. At one point he caustically remarks, "Surely this is not science."²⁵ Concerning the unprovable nature of Darwin's theory, he remarks, "Science as soon as she gets past the actual and the extant, is in the region of speculation, and is merged into philosophy, and is subject to all its hallucinations."²⁶ Hodge was adamant that Darwin's theory did not offer a satisfactory account of all the relevant data, and furthermore, that the data for which it did account were explainable in other ways.

Hodge also recognized that the question of the fixity of species was problematic for Darwin, and he used the lack of consensus within the scientific community over this issue to his benefit. If it could be demonstrated that species are immutable, then Darwin's theory would be rendered completely untenable. For this purpose Hodge enlisted scientific authorities who affirmed the fixity of species, among them John William Dawson, Georges Cuvier, and primarily Louis Agassiz. Although he previously disagreed with Agassiz over the issue of polygenesis, remarking that, "The theory of Agassiz contradicts all history,"²⁷ Hodge sided with him on the question of the fixity of species. Hodge employed a good measure of rhetoric when he wrote, "never was a theory more sorely beset than is that of Darwin by the repeated assaults of such a giant in paleontology as Agassiz . . . Stone after stone of the Darwinian structure trembles before the battering ram of the champion of species."²⁸ Thus while this and other scientific objections—such as the sparseness of Darwin's geological evidence, the lack of a means of passing down favorable traits to offspring, and the unrea-

sonable default appeal to vast amounts of time whenever a portion of the theory seemed untenable or impossible—were not as essential to his argument as was the question of design, Hodge nonetheless used them as a means to further dent the Darwinian armor.

As I have emphasized, the bulk of Hodge's attack on Darwinism was theological. The denial of design entailed the denial of an intelligent designer. Hodge's argument in *What Is Darwinism?* ends once he concludes that it is atheism. His argument is not primarily intended to convince atheists to reject their position, but rather to demonstrate that Darwinism is indeed ateleological and therefore atheistic.²⁹ While Hodge is acutely aware of the theological implications that Darwin's theory has on matters of central importance to the Christian faith, such as the sovereignty of God, the possibility of the Incarnation or Resurrection and the efficacy of prayer, he does not use *What Is Darwinism?* as a forum for drawing out or assessing those implications. However, his silence in this regard only more pointedly articulates his unswerving certainty that Darwinism, defined as ateleology, threatened the very foundation of Christian belief.³⁰ Having traced Hodge's response to Darwinism, we will now turn to that of his student, and later occupant of his chair in Systematic Theology, Benjamin B. Warfield.

Warfield

Interestingly, while Charles Darwin initially prepared to enter the ministry and later chose science, as a young man Warfield aspired to be a scientist and only subsequently decided to go into ministry. Born into a wealthy family near Lexington Kentucky in 1851, Warfield's father was a farmer knowledgeable in cattle breeding, and actually authored a book on the subject.³¹ Reared on the farm, Warfield was acquainted with the breeding patterns of cattle and developed

²⁹Although Hodge concludes *What Is Darwinism?* by juxtaposing a quote from Strauss and a quote from St. Paul in order to highlight the existential consequences of the atheistic and Christian positions, these two paragraphs are not in keeping with the rest of his argument.

³⁰It is important enough to reiterate that Hodge thought there should be no conflict between Christianity and science. His argument contended against Darwinism as a particular theory, and a potentially lethal one at that, but not against science in general. For a good discussion of why the use of a military metaphor to describe the relationship between science and theology during this period is unhelpful, see, James R. Moore, *The Post-Darwinian Controversies: A Study of the Protestant Struggle to Come to Terms with Darwin in Great Britain and America, 1870-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1979). For a helpful treatment of the way in which later Fundamentalism departed from earlier evangelical openness to science in general and evolution in particular, see, David N. Livingstone, *Darwin's Forgotten Defenders: The Encounter Between Evangelical Theology and Evolutionary Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 146-184.

³¹For this point, and also for valuable research insights, I am grateful to William O. Harris, Librarian for Archives and Special Collections, Princeton Theological Seminary.

²⁴Ibid., 168.

²⁵Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2: 32.

²⁶Hodge, Ibid., 2: 22.

²⁷Charles Hodge, "Unity of Mankind," *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 31 (1859): 145.

²⁸Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2: 15 note.

an early interest in the sciences. In fact, while a student at the College of New Jersey, Warfield considered himself "A Darwinian of the purest water."³² In his "Personal Recollections of Princeton Undergraduate Life," he recalls, "I knew my *Origin of Species*, and *Animals and Plants under Domestication*, almost from A to Zard."³³ However, when he referred to himself as a "Darwinian," he was not using the term in the sense that Hodge understood it. He did not mean to say that when he was at college he espoused a philosophy

When [Warfield] referred to himself as a "Darwinian," he was not using the term in the sense that Hodge understood it.

which denied design and was thus atheistic. Rather, Warfield, unlike Hodge, regarded the occurrence of evolution, if understood as a process divinely guided, as an unproven but nonetheless convincing theory. Thus, he here uses the term "Darwinian" to affirm his commitment to an understanding of evolution as the means by which God ordered (designed) the development of life up to its present form. As we will see, this point is crucial for a proper understanding of the similarities between Warfield and Hodge. When Warfield speaks of Darwinism he does not usually have in mind the theory as Darwin espoused it, but rather a modified form of evolution which is compatible with Christianity.

Given his endorsement of evolutionary theory, when James McCosh announced his acceptance of Darwin's theory "properly limited and explained"³⁴ shortly after becoming president of the College of New Jersey in 1868, Warfield was delighted. Describing him as "a great man and a great teacher," Warfield was impressed with McCosh's incorporation of evolution into an orthodox Christian faith, and regarded him as "distinctly the most inspiring force which came into my life in my college days."³⁵ However, while McCosh regarded evolution as an established fact, and Warfield may have considered it as such while he was a student at the College of New Jersey, Warfield later came to regard evolution as an unproven hypothesis. He came to consider it a "more or less probable, or a more or less improbable conjecture of scientific workers as to the method of creation."³⁶ In other words, while McCosh considered evo-

lution a fact, Warfield later "fell away from this, his orthodoxy,"³⁷ and regarded it as an unproven theory. One might speculate that this change was due largely in part to his having studied under Hodge at the very time that he was writing *What Is Darwinism?*. Even after studying with Hodge, however, Warfield remained persuaded that evolution had indeed occurred. Nonetheless, as we will shortly see, while Hodge did not convince Warfield of evolution's absurdity, the views expressed in *What Is Darwinism?* left a lasting impression on his young student.

The influence of Hodge and McCosh on Warfield's thinking concerning this subject is evident in his lecture on "Anthropology." While the majority of this lecture was composed relatively early in Warfield's career at Princeton Seminary (1888), and he exhibited an increased tendency to affirm the occurrence of evolution as his career progressed, the lecture is nonetheless a reliable source concerning both what he considered to be the crucial issues involved in the debate and also the definitions he assigned to key terms. He begins, "There are three general positions which may be taken up with reference to the various development or evolutionary hypotheses now so common." These positions Warfield regarded as follows:

1. "An adequate philosophy of being . . . supplying a complete account of the origin and present state of the universe." Warfield understood this to be Darwin's position, and notes that, "the theory as held by him was essentially atheistic, as Dr. Charles Hodge asserted."

2. "A discovery of science of the order and conditions under which the various living forms have as a matter of fact come into existence . . . In this form the theory . . . is made a second cause and implies a first cause . . . This is the form in which Dr. McCosh holds it."³⁸ The second position, then, regards evolution as an established scientific fact.

3. "We may look on this hypothesis . . . as a working hypothesis which is at present on its probation and seeking to try itself by the facts." Warfield then writes, "This is the position which I should commend to you as a reasonable one to occupy as to it."³⁹

Warfield here demonstrates that he agrees with Hodge concerning the underlying atheism in Darwin's theory. He also agrees that the theory as Darwin understood it is ateleological. To confirm this point he quotes Darwin himself who, in a letter to Charles Lyell, wrote:

I entirely reject as in my judgment quite unnecessary, any subsequent addition "of new powers and attributes and forces," or of any "principle of improvement" . . . I Thankfully, this text has been painstakingly transcribed from Warfield's original notes by Bradley J. Gundlach. The page numbers cited in my paper refer to Gundlach's transcription. For the rest of this essay I will refer to this lecture as "Anthropology."

³⁷Warfield, "Personal Recollections of Princeton Undergraduate Life," 652.

³⁸Emphasis added.

³⁹Warfield, "Anthropology," 1.

³²"Personal Recollections of Princeton Undergraduate Life: IV— The Coming of Dr. McCosh," *Princeton Alumni Weekly* 16, no. 28 (19 April 1916): 652.

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴James McCosh, *The Religious Aspect of Evolution* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1888), xi.

³⁵Warfield, "Personal Recollections of Princeton Undergraduate Life," 652.

³⁶Benjamin B. Warfield, MS Notes on Anthropology (Systematic Theology course, junior year). Original in Princeton Theological Seminary Archives, Alumni Alcove.

have reflected a good deal on what you say on the necessity of continued intervention of creative power. I cannot see this necessity; and its admission, I think, would make the theory of natural selection valueless.⁴⁰

Warfield rejects, however, McCosh's position that evolution was an established scientific fact, and he devotes the entire first section of the "Anthropology" lecture to arguing this point. Thus, Warfield agrees with Hodge that the theory of evolution as understood by Darwin is ateleological and atheistic, but he disagrees with McCosh who regarded it as scientific fact. It is important to note, however, that although Warfield regarded evolution as unproven, he nonetheless found it a convincing theory.⁴¹ He writes, "We may hold it to be probably true and yet agree that it is yet on trial and not yet shown to be true."⁴²

While the first section of the "Anthropology" lecture is devoted to mapping out the three broad forms of the theory of evolution and arguing the point that evolution had yet to be proven, the second section of this lecture contains Warfield's unique contribution to the debate. He argues that the Christian faith, while not antagonistic to evolution, contains certain doctrines that cannot be explained without reference to God's supernatural interference within the process of biological development. The doctrines of the *substantiality* and *immateriality of the soul* require the "interfering hand of God."⁴³ The reason for the necessity of such interference is that while evolution can be understood as being guided by God's providence, the ontological nature of the soul is such that it cannot be the result of the development of preexisting substances. The human soul is of a completely different ontological order than the biological substances involved in evolutionary development, and thus in order to exist it must be created by a special act of God. Evolution is a possible explanation for the method in which providence works to develop God's *initial creation*, but it is incapable of "creating" anything new. The process of evolution can account for the modification of already existing materials, but it cannot create new ones, especially not ones of an entirely distinct ontological order. As Warfield writes:

To hold the common doctrine of the soul, we must then believe *at least* that the evolutionary process has been broken at the point where an immaterial principle of

life, as distinguished from what we may call physical life, came in . . . if the soul be immaterial substance it was not the product of material substances and forces.⁴⁴

Indeed, unless one allows for this type of divine intrusion into the created order, the door is left wide open to an interpretation of the whole of natural history through a Deistic framework. That is, in order to safeguard against the relegation of God to a theoretical starting place with no subsequent effect on the course of natural history, a position which both Hodge and Warfield alike regarded as tantamount to atheism, Warfield demanded that God has in the past and continues in the present to supernaturally intervene into the natural order in the creation of human souls.⁴⁵ Warfield later termed this intervention "mediate creation."⁴⁶ He writes:

By "mediate creation" is really meant the truly creative acts of God occurring in the course of His providential government, by virtue of which something absolutely new is inserted into the complex of nature—something for the production of which there is requisite the immediate "flash of the will that can."⁴⁷

Thus Warfield sharply contrasts "mediate creation" from God's original creation of matter and life and also from evolution and providence. Providence, "evolution if you choose to call it such,"⁴⁸ is God's interaction and ordering of already existing substances to intelligible ends, and must not be confused with God's initial creation, nor does it include acts of mediate creation. It is with these distinctions in mind that Warfield writes, "The upshot of the whole matter is that there is no *necessary* antagonism of Christianity to evolution, *provided that* we do not hold to too extreme a form of evolution."⁴⁹ By "too extreme a form" Warfield meant precisely a form of evolution that denied "mediate creation."

Having established these categories, the apparent antagonism between the two quotes that begin this essay disappears. As we have already seen, when Hodge and Warfield refer to "Darwinism," they do so with different definitions in mind. Hodge admitted that there was a theistic interpretation of the doctrine of evolution, and that there was no *necessary* conflict between evolution and Christianity. Such an inter-

⁴⁰Warfield, "Charles Darwin's Religious Life," 554.

⁴¹This, however, does not mean that he found the *Darwinian* form of evolution convincing. In fact, his "Anthropology" lecture shows that he had serious difficulties with the theory of evolution as understood by Darwin. After listing a number of problems with Darwin's idea of natural selection, he remarks, "any form of evolution which rests ultimately on the Darwinian idea, is very improbable as an account of even *how* God has wrought in producing species." Nonetheless, he continues, "I would not have this understood as equivalent to denying" the occurrence of evolution. Warfield, "Anthropology," 8.

⁴²Ibid., 2.

⁴³Ibid., 11.

⁴⁴Ibid., 9-10. See also Warfield, "Editorial Notes," *The Bible Student* 8 (1903): 2-42.

⁴⁵Warfield also included miracles and the Incarnation as examples of "mediate creation."

⁴⁶For a very helpful discussion of the distinctions Warfield makes between mediate creation, absolute creation, evolution and providence see, Deryl F. Johnson, "The Attitudes of the Princeton Theologians Toward Darwinism and Evolution from 1859-1929" (Ph.D. diss., U. of Iowa, 1968), 211 ff.

⁴⁷Benjamin B. Warfield, "Editorial Notes," *The Bible Student* 4 (1901): 7.

⁴⁸Ibid., 8.

⁴⁹Warfield, "Anthropology," 12.

pretation is exactly what Warfield had in mind when he referred to "the Darwinian form of the hypothesis." Darwin was strident in his rejection of the introduction of any divine intervention into the process of natural selection. Thus, given Warfield's insistence on the necessity of "mediate creation," he clearly disagrees with the theory of evolution as Darwin himself espoused it. The quote at the beginning of this essay would be completely inconsistent with the rest of Warfield's conclusions unless one assumes that when he referred to the "Darwinian form of the hypothesis" Warfield did not have in mind the theory as Darwin himself understood it.

It is precisely his attention to the distinctions between absolute creation, "mediate creation" and providence that allows Warfield to make his famous statement that "[John] Calvin's doctrine of creation is, if we have understood it aright, for all except the souls of men, an evolutionary one."⁵⁰ Warfield describes Calvin's doctrine of creation as the initial creation of an "ingested mass" (matter and life) which included "the 'promise and potency' of all that was yet to be." And further, that "all that has come into being since—except the souls of men alone—has arisen as a modification of this original world-stuff by means of the interaction of its intrinsic forces."⁵¹ Thus, Calvin's position fits nicely into Warfield's categories of absolute creation, "mediate creation" and evolution. In fact, while Warfield, in his "Anthropology" lecture, never quite admitted to being an evolutionist, he was clear in his judgment that Calvin was one. He even went as far as to argue that Calvin regarded human beings as the product of evolutionary development. About Calvin he writes:

What concerns us here is that he ascribed the entire series of modifications by which the primal "ingested mass," called "heaven and earth," has passed into the form of the ordered world which we see, including the origination of all forms of life, vegetable and animal alike, *inclusive doubtless of the bodily form of man*, to second causes as their proximate account. And this we say is a very pure evolutionary scheme.⁵² (emphasis mine)

While I have not examined whether Warfield rightly interpreted Calvin on this point, for the purposes of this paper it makes no difference. What is revealing is that Warfield appealed to what was for him the highest theological authority, besides the Scriptures and possibly the Reformed Confessions, to support an evolutionary understanding of natural history. In my judgment, this is indicative of the fact that Warfield ultimately became persuaded that evolution "properly limited and explained" was indeed the "method by which God works."⁵³

⁵⁰Benjamin B. Warfield, "Calvin's Doctrine of the Creation," *Princeton Theological Review* 13 (1915): 208.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid., 209.

⁵³McCosh, *The Religious Aspect of Evolution*, 58. While Gundlach demonstrates a command of these issues, he

In summary, I have argued that Warfield's appraisal of evolution exhibits a traceable pattern of development. As a young man he endorsed an evolutionary understanding of God's providence. Then during his early years as a professor he modified this position and regarded evolution as a scientific theory as yet unproven. And finally, while still regarding evolution as unproven, he nonetheless became increasingly convinced that it was indeed the method of God's design. It has also been shown that Warfield considered evolution alone incapable of accounting for the existence of the human soul. Instead, he argued that each individual soul is the result of a direct act of God within the natural order. Thus, Warfield incorporates evolution into the process of God's design, while simultaneously safeguarding God's ability to act supernaturally within history.

Conclusion

Having concluded the section on Warfield, we are now prepared to tie together the various strands of the argument up to this point. There is a glaring difference in emphasis between the previous two sections of this essay. While the section on Hodge is chiefly comprised of his arguments against Darwinism both as a manifestation of atheistic philosophy as well as an example of bad science, the section on Warfield focuses primarily on his thought concerning evolution and the viability of its place within a Christian doctrine of creation. There is a reason for this. The argument of this paper is that the responses of these two men to Darwinism, while they differ on the question of the likelihood of the occurrence of evolution, are fundamentally in agreement. As I have argued above, Hodge and Warfield define "Darwinism" differently, and as a result they respond

Warfield's interaction with the theory of evolution, and his ability to incorporate it into their shared Calvinist theological tradition, paradoxically facilitates an increased appreciation for the strengths of Hodge's work.

to it differently. Hodge sees Darwinism's denial of design as a threat to the very foundation of Christian belief, and thus devotes his energy to a demonstration that Darwin's theory, when carried to its logical conclusion, is atheistic. Warfield, on the other hand, is optimistic about the possibilities of Darwin's theory and thus focuses most of his attention on making the positive case that evolution, understood teleologically, is compatible with orthodox, and even Calvinist, Christian belief. However, when viewed conjointly, these dissimilar responses surprisingly complement one another.

nonetheless seems to underplay the extent to which Warfield, as he grew older, became more inclined to regard evolution as having occurred. See his "The Evolution Question at Princeton," 144-149.

Rather than detracting from one another, each man's work actually strengthens and enhances the other. We will now examine how this is the case.

It is first helpful to note the similarities between their views regarding natural science. Throughout their lives, both men made efforts to be in touch with the pulse of the scientific community. Each paid careful attention to current scientific research and conclusions. Both read widely and, for men who were not professional natural scientists, demonstrated a remarkable understanding of many of the scientific issues of their day. Both men were influenced by the tradition of Scottish Common Sense philosophy, esteemed induction as the proper method of attaining knowledge, and regarded theology as a "science."⁵⁴ Thus, while they disagreed over evolution, they nonetheless had similar presuppositions concerning the relationship of science and Christianity, and in fact came to the same conclusions on many of the hot scientific topics of their time. Both argued for the unity of humankind,⁵⁵ and affirmed that the chronologies of the Bible were not intended to be a device for determining the age of the earth.⁵⁶ Thus the presuppositions which Hodge and Warfield brought to the debate over Darwinism were virtually the same.

In spite of these similarities, it is important to point out that Warfield was more than fifty years younger than Hodge, and was writing on the subjects of Darwinism and evolution well into the first part of the twentieth century. By this time Darwinism had become entrenched as a dominant theory within the scientific community. This meant that Warfield had the advantage of a great deal of scientific reflection and debate concerning the merits of Darwinism

which Hodge did not have. Furthermore, whereas Warfield had the luxury of interacting with Darwin's theory from the time he was a boy, Darwin's work was still relatively new when Hodge wrote his book in 1874. Thus, one begins to understand some of the reasons why they might have arrived at different conclusions regarding evolution. Given the increasing ascendancy of Darwinism among respected scientists, Warfield was more likely than Hodge to be open to Darwin's ideas. It is understandable, then, that Warfield was primarily interested in gleaning the wheat from Darwin's ideas, whereas Hodge was intent on exposing them as chaff. These points are mentioned to illustrate that the conclusions that Hodge and Warfield made concerning Darwinism, and the parts of the theory that they chose to emphasize, were not the result of any fundamental disagreement concerning the issues of natural science and its relationship to Christianity, but were rather due, in part at least, to their different places within the history of the flow of these ideas.

Indeed, it is my argument that Warfield's entire theological response to Darwinism builds upon the previous work of Hodge. Warfield's work presupposes Hodge's argument in *What Is Darwinism?*, that the theory as understood by Darwin is ateleological and thus atheistic. But whereas Hodge was content to conclude his argument once he reached this point, Warfield continued the inquiry into Darwinism and was able to incorporate a modified form of evolution into a framework of Christian orthodoxy.

Likewise, Warfield's interaction with the theory of evolution, and his ability to incorporate it into their shared Calvinist theological tradition, paradoxically facilitates an increased appreciation for the strengths of Hodge's work. Hodge is at his best when elucidating the underlying philosophy which attends Darwinian theory, and not when commenting on evolution in particular. In fact the most glaring flaw in Hodge's contribution to this debate is his inflexibility on the issue of evolution. Unfortunately, historians have tended to emphasize this aspect of his thought while neglecting his razor sharp and penetrating analysis of Darwinian presuppositions. However, if Warfield and Hodge are viewed as allies in these matters rather than opponents, then Warfield's more sophisticated treatment of evolution mitigates the shortcomings of Hodge's less nuanced conclusions, and can actually serve to clear the way for a greater appreciation of Hodge's brilliance in laying bare the naturalistic philosophy which undergirds Darwin's work.

Thus, Hodge's analysis of Darwinian presuppositions and Warfield's successful incorporation of evolution into Calvinist theology augment one another to the extent that their work is more compelling when viewed in tandem than when in isolation. Hodge and Warfield are not opponents on these matters. Their divergent definitions of Darwinism have obscured their fundamental agreement. Both affirmed the inductive scientific method, considered the truths of science and theology to be in harmony, safeguarded God's ability to intervene supernaturally within history, and emphatically affirmed the necessity of divine design. It is true that they conflicted over the likelihood of the occurrence of evolution, but both agreed that there were more important issues at stake in these debates—and on these they were in accord.

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⁵⁴Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 1: 1-33; Warfield, *Studies in Theology*, 49-105.

⁵⁵Charles Hodge, "The Testimony of Modern Science to the Unity of Mankind," *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 31 (1859): 103-149; Benjamin B. Warfield, "On the Antiquity and the Unity of the Human Race," *Princeton Theological Review* 9 (1911): 23.

⁵⁶Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2: 41; Benjamin B. Warfield, "Editorial Notes," *The Bible Student* 8 (1903): 245.

Q, M, L and Other Sources for the Historical Jesus

DENNIS INGOLFSLAND

Critique of Crossan

In *The Historical Jesus*,¹ John Dominic Crossan proposed a methodology for arriving at some degree of certainty regarding our knowledge of the historical Jesus. He did this by identifying what he considered to be the earliest sources for Jesus' life, classifying them by "strata" or date range, and comparing accounts which were multiply and independently attested. The greater the attestation and the earlier the strata, the greater the probability that we have uncovered facts about the historical Jesus. While in theory, Crossan's methodology has much to commend it, in practice his study was seriously flawed in several ways.

(I) Use of Questionable Sources

First, it has been argued that Crossan relies much too heavily on sources not widely accepted by the scholarly community as qualifying for his "first strata."² Sources such as the Cross Gospel, the miracles collections, and the apocalyptic scenario have been questioned because they are merely literary reconstructions of otherwise unknown documents which have been excised from other sources. These literary reconstructions are not as widely recognized in the scholarly world as "Q," for example.

The dates of some of Crossan's first strata sources have also been challenged. For example, the earliest Greek fragment of the Gospel of Thomas is dated to about 200 A.D.³ Many would argue that the date of the original is still too much in doubt to be considered as a first strata source for uncovering the historical Jesus. The Egerton Gospel, another of Crossan's first strata sources, contains only 87 lines from a second or third century codex.⁴ Although some have argued that the Egerton Gospel reflects

very early independent oral tradition,⁵ others maintain that it is dependent on the four canonical gospels, which would make it too late to qualify as a first strata source. The Cross Gospel is an account of Jesus' crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection, embedded in the Gospel of Peter, which can be dated not later than 200 A.D. How much before 200 A.D. the Gospel of Peter was written is not certain. Crossan argued that the "Cross Gospel" was written in the middle of the first century and was the basis for the passion accounts in the canonical gospels. In his refutation of Crossan, Koester argued for the independence of the Cross Gospel and canonical Gospel traditions.⁶ The date is still uncertain even among post-Bultmannians.

While a few of these sources may provide independent attestation for some of Jesus' sayings and actions, the only first strata sources listed by Crossan which are sufficiently agreed upon in the scholarly world to provide a solid first strata basis for the historical Jesus are "Q" and the four letters of Paul which Crossan considers genuine. Building a foundation on the other questionable sources tends to undermine the entire structure of Crossan's reconstruction of Jesus.

(II) Selective Use of Sources

Crossan also seems to be selective in his use of sources. First, even though he classifies four of Paul's letters as first strata sources, they played very little part in his reconstruction of Jesus.⁷ For example, Crossan portrays Jesus as a non-eschatological Cynic, in spite of clear Pauline statements which depict Jesus as the eschatological Jewish Messiah.⁸ Crossan takes a considerable amount of space trying to explain away the data rather than allowing Paul the consideration his statements deserve.⁹

Second, while Crossan takes for granted Streeter's theory of the priority of Mark and the existence of "Q," he does not even discuss the role of "M" and "L" which were

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¹John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991).

²Gregory Boyd, *Cynic, Sage or Son of God* (Wheaton: Bridgepoint, 1995) 79-80.

³Marvin Meyer, ed., *The Gospel of Thomas* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), 10.

⁴Crossan, *Historical*, 428.

⁵Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International), 213-15.

⁶*Ibid.*, 217-220.

⁷Gregory Boyd, *Cynic*, 80.

⁸E.g., 1 Cor 4:5, 15:23-28; 1 Thess 4:16-17.

⁹Crossan, *Historical*, 238-49.

also postulated by Streeter.¹⁰ While it is widely accepted that Matthew and Luke have added "seams" or connecting links between pericopae, it seems highly unlikely that they have simply created large sections of material *ex nihilo*.

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Such creations are especially out of character for Luke and are not likely to have been widely accepted by Christians whose lives were often at stake. Therefore, if we are to take "Q" seriously, it would seem that we should also take "M" and "L" seriously as well.

(III) Arbitrary Exclusion of Sources

Crossan's choice of 60 A.D. as the terminus for the first strata appears to be arbitrary at best, and possibly ideologically motivated. As Boyd points out, Crossan has conveniently excluded all of the Gospel of Mark from first strata consideration:

Most significantly, Crossan, without explanation, draws the parameters of his 'first' and primary strata—the contents of which alone are allowed as material for his reconstruction—as being A.D. 30-60. What is strange about this is that we have no extant literary output from A.D. 30 to 50 by anyone's count. Hence, the decade of the fifties is made by Crossan to function as a sort of magical ten-year period which alone speaks for the historical Jesus.¹¹

A better terminus might have been the turn of the century which is only 70 years removed from the time of Jesus' death. Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius, for example, all wrote about events more than seventy years after the fact, and they are not therefore excluded from historical consideration on that basis.

The next logical first strata terminus would seem to be 70 A.D., since the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. was a watershed in ancient Jewish history and is the primary criteria on which the Gospels and Acts are dated. Those who were in their twenties during the time of Jesus' ministry, would only be in their sixties during the Jewish War so

many of those who had seen and heard Jesus would still have been alive when the fall of Jerusalem occurred. Although many in the first century undoubtedly died young, a life span beyond sixty years of age was not uncommon.¹² It also seems certain that some, if not many, of the apostles lived on past 60 A.D. (e.g., Paul, Peter, James, John) so to cut off the first strata even before their deaths seems unwarranted, to say the least.

Revised Methodology

While reading Crossan's *The Historical Jesus* I began to wonder what would happen if the deficiencies discussed above were removed. What would the result be if 70 A.D. were the first strata cutoff date rather than 60 A.D., if the questionable sources were removed from consideration, and if Mark, "M," "L," and Paul were given their proper weight? Robert Stein once wrote:

We must still ask how our knowledge of the relationship between the synoptic Gospels assists us in historical criticism. One way is by means of the "Criterion of Multiple Attestation." Essentially this criterion works as follows: Assuming that the Markan, the Q, and the unique Matthean (M), Lukan (L), and Johannine material come from different sources, if a teaching or activity of Jesus is witnessed to in a number of these sources rather than just one (e.g., John or M), the probability of its historicity or authenticity is much greater.¹³

Stein has argued in various places for the authenticity of certain actions or sayings of Jesus based on multiple attestation using "M" and "L," but I am unaware of anyone who has used "M" and "L" in an attempt to reconstruct the historical Jesus. So taking my cue from Stein and Streeter (below), I set out as an experiment, to refine Crossan's methodology.

(I) First Strata Sources: A More Solid Foundation

Streeter's Four Source theory has been assumed for this experiment because, although it has been under serious attack lately,¹⁴ it still appears to be the scholarly consensus

¹²For example, Cicero, Livy, Augustus, Tiberius, Seneca, Plutarch, Tacitus, Suetonius, Juvenal, Epictetus, and Josephus all appear to have lived beyond their sixtieth birthday. Some lived considerably longer than sixty, for example Juvenal and Epictetus both lived to be about 80.

¹³Robert Stein, *The Synoptic Problem* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 142.

¹⁴Cf. Allan McNicol, *Beyond the Impasse—Luke's Use of Matthew* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1996); William Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem* (Dillsboro, NC: Western North Carolina Press, 1976); Eta Linnemann, *Is There a Synoptic Problem?* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992); John Wenham, *Redating Matthew, Mark & Luke* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992).

¹⁰Burnett Hillman Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1924), 234ff. Cf. K. Giles, "The L Tradition," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. by Joel B. Green et al. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 432.

¹¹Boyd, *Cynic*, 80-81.

on the solution to the synoptic problem. Since "Q" is generally dated prior to 70 A.D., I have followed Crossan in assigning it to the first strata. Some scholars follow Kloppenborg's proposal to the effect that "Q" went through two revisions and would date the third revision (3Q) after 70 A.D.¹⁵ I have argued elsewhere, however, against this theory¹⁶ and since I don't believe it is widely accepted, I am still assuming that all of "Q" was written prior to 70 A.D. In following Streeter I have also, *contra* Crossan, included "M" and "L" in my reconstruction. While scholars generally agree that "Q" was a written source, this is not necessarily the case for "M" or "L." Both may have consisted of multiple sources, written and oral, but their original form is irrelevant for the purposes of this study. Streeter dates "M" and "L" to 60 A.D., so they also qualify for my first strata.

Ultimately, my source for "M" and "L" was Aland's *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*. My results were compared with Streeter's lists¹⁷ of unique material in Matthew and Luke, and nothing which was omitted by Streeter was allowed to stand in my highly abbreviated version of "M"¹⁸ and "L."¹⁹ I have also omitted all places listed by Streeter where "M" and "L" supposedly overlap with Mark or "Q." I have further omitted many passages listed by Streeter which could likely be explained away as being "seams" or editorial insertions on the part of the

evangelists. Therefore my version of "M" and "L" is much smaller than the unique material identified by Streeter. If Streeter's entire list were included, my reconstruction of the historical Jesus would be considerably enlarged and strengthened.

My source for "Q" is Kloppenborg,²⁰ whom I have simply adopted uncritically since he seems to be in the forefront of "Q" studies. I have followed Kloppenborg²¹ and Mack²² in identifying three layers to "Q" in the footnotes for reference purposes, though, as mentioned above, I find the arguments for the stratification of "Q" to be unconvincing.

Since "most scholars date Mark to the years 64-70,"²³ I have placed it in my first strata, *contra* Crossan. In addition to "Q," "M," "L," and Mark, I have also included the letters of Paul which Crossan included in his first strata: First Thessalonians, Galatians, First Corinthians, and Romans. Although Crossan omits Second Corinthians and Philippians from consideration, I have included them in my

Crossan's choice of 60 A.D. as the terminus for the first strata appears to be arbitrary at best, and possibly ideologically motivated . . . Crossan has conveniently excluded all of the Gospel of Mark from first strata consideration.

¹⁵Burton Mack, *Who Wrote the New Testament?* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995), 311.

¹⁶Dennis Ingolfsland, "A Review of 'Who Wrote the New Testament,'" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153 (1997): 5-9.

¹⁷Streeter, *Four Gospels*, 198.

¹⁸All of the following passages are identified by Streeter as being peculiar to Matthew. Only those in bold were used in this study: "M" = Matthew **1:1-2:21**, 22-23; 4:13-16, 23-25; 5:1-2, 4-5, 7-10, 13a, 14, 16-17, 19-24, 27-28, 31-32, **33-37**, 38-39a, 41, 43; **6:1-6**, 7-8, 10b, 13b, **16-18**, 34, 7:6, 12b, 15, 19-20, 28a; 8:1, 5a, 17; 9:13a, 26-36; 10:2a, 5b-8, 23, 25b, 36, 41; **11:1**, 14, 20, 23b, **28-30**; 12:5-7, 11-12a, 17-23, 36-37, 40; 13:14-15, 18, **24-30**, 35, **36-52**, 53; 14:28-31; 15:12-13, 23-25, 30-31; 16:2b-3, 11b-12, 17-19, 22b; 17:6-7, 13, **24-27**; 18:3-4, 10, 14, 16-20, **23-35**; 19:1a, 9-12, 28a; **20:1-16**; 21:4-5, 10-11, 14, 15b-16, 28-32, 43; 22:1-14, 33-34, 40; 23:1-3, 5, 7b-10, 15-22, 24, 28, 32-33; 24:10-12, 20, 30a; 25:1-13, **31-46**; 26:1, 44, 50, 52-54; **27:3-10**, 19, 24-25, 36, 43, 51b-53, **62-66**; 28:2-4, 9-10, **11-15**, 16-20.

¹⁹All of these passages are identified by Streeter as being peculiar to Luke (Streeter, 198). Only those in bold were used in this study: **1:1-3:2**, 5-6, **10-13**, 14, **23-38**; 4:13, 15; 5:39; 6:24-26, 34; 7:3-6a, 11-17, 21, 29-30, **40-50**; **10:29-42**; 8:1-3; 9:31-32, 43, 51-56, 61-62; 10:1, 16, 17-20, 29-42; 11:1, **5-8**, 12, 16, 27-28, 36-38, 40-41, 45, 53-54; **12:13-21**, 32-33a, 35-38; **13:1-17**, 22-23, 25-27, **31-33**; **14:1-14**, 15-24; 28-33; 15:1-2, **7-32**; **16:1-15**, **19-31**; **17:7-19**, 20-22, 25-29, 32; **18:1-8**, 9-13a, 34; **19:1-10**, 11-27, 39-40, **41-44**; 20:34-35a, 36b, 38b; 21:19-20, 22, 24, 26a, 28, 34-36, **37-38**; 22:15-18, 28-30a, 31-32, **35-38**, 43-44; 48-49, 51, 53b, 61a, 68, 70; 23:2, 4-5, **6-12**, 13-19, 27-32, 34a, 36, 39-43, 46b, 48, 51a, 53b-54, 56b; **24:10-53**.

first strata on the authority of Koester,²⁴ Kummel,²⁵ Bornkamm,²⁶ Mack²⁷ and other critical scholars who accept these epistles as genuine.

²⁰John S. Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 74-76. Q = Luke 3:7-9, 6-17; 4:1-13; 6:20b-23, 27-49; 7:1-10; 18-23, 24-35; 9:57-60; 10:2-16, 21-24; 11:2-4, 9-15, 17-26, 29-36, 39-52; 12:2-12, 22-32, 33-34, 39-40, 42-46, 49, 51-53, 57-59; 13:18-19, 20-21, 24-30, 34-35; 14:16-27, 34-35; 15:3-7; 16:13, 16, 17, 18; 17:1-6, 23-24, 26-30, 33-36; 19:12-27; 22:28-30.

²¹*Ibid.*, 102-262.

²²Burton Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1993), 81-102.

²³Cf. Werner Kummel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 71.

²⁴Koester, *Ancient*, 126-130, 132.

²⁵*Introduction*, 211, 235.

²⁶Gunther Bornkamm, *The New Testament: A Guide to its Writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), 74.

²⁷*Who Wrote*, 127, 144.

(II) First Strata Terminus

Although, as mentioned above, I see no reason that the terminus for the first strata couldn't be 100 A.D., I have chosen to make 70 A.D. terminus for this experiment just to give skeptics the benefit of the doubt. This places "Q," "M," "L," Mark, First Thessalonians, Galatians, First and Second Corinthians, Romans and Philippians in the first strata. Although I consider the Pastoral epistles, the epistles of Peter, the synoptic Gospels and the book of Acts to have been written prior to 70 A.D., they have not been included as first strata sources due to lack of scholarly consensus.

(III) Multiple Attestation

For the purpose of this experiment, multiple independent attestation has been used as the primary criteria. The comparisons, however, have not been limited to specific events, sayings or pericopae, but rather to general characteristics. For example, if one source reported that Jesus taught in the synagogue, and another reported that he taught in the Temple, while still another reported that he taught by the Sea of Galilee, this would not be multiple attestation for his teaching by Sea of Galilee, but it would be multiple attestation to the fact that he was a teacher. A more modern example might be that of a man standing trial for assaulting his neighbor. The first witness testifies that he saw the accused beat his wife. The second testifies that he saw the accused hit his bartender. The third testifies that he saw the accused beat his next door neighbor. While this may not be enough evidence to convict on the specific assault charge before the court, it would most likely be sufficient evidence to convince the jury that the man was at least occasionally given to violence. Similarly, there may or may not be multiple attestation to a particular miracle of Jesus, but there is significant multiple attestation to his reputation as a miracle worker.

A Minimum Reconstruction of the Historical Jesus

In the following reconstruction, the verses in the footnotes identified as "Q" always correspond to Luke rather than Matthew (e.g., Q 6:21 = Luke 6:21). The verses identified by "M" always correspond to Matthew (e.g., M 1:21 = Matthew 1:21). Likewise, those identified by L correspond to Luke (e.g., L 1:21 = Luke 1:21). The footnotes have been cited this way to make it clear that the citation would be part of that body of material which is part of the "Q," "M," or "L" sources, and not just part of the material common to Matthew, Mark and Luke. All verses from the Gospel of Thomas are cited from Robinson's *Nag Hammadi Library*.²⁸ Early church fathers are cited by book and chapter from the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*.²⁹ References in the first strata are cited in bold. Other possibly independent

collaborating evidence is listed in regular print for reference purposes. It is important to note that the references are simply representative and not exhaustive.

Jesus was born during the reign of Herod the Great.³⁰ His father was named Joseph,³¹ his mother was named Mary,³² and both were descendants of David.³³ Mary was believed by Jesus' followers to have been a virgin at the time of the conception and birth.³⁴ Jesus was born in Bethlehem³⁵ but eventually returned to Nazareth with his parents and was raised there.³⁶

Jesus' ministry took place when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea³⁷ and Herod was ruler of Galilee.³⁸ Just prior to his ministry Jesus spent forty days fasting in the Judean wilderness,³⁹ after which he eventually gathered twelve primary disciples⁴⁰ and traveled from town to town⁴¹ preaching and teaching in the synagogues⁴² and in the temple.⁴³ He became known as a prophet⁴⁴ and his reputation as a miracle worker, healer and exorcist is widely attested.⁴⁵

Jesus' teaching was often, though not always, in

³⁰L 1:5ff; M 2:1, 12.

³¹L 1:27; M 1:18, 24, 2:13; Jn 1:15, 6:42.

³²Mk 6:3; L 1:27; M 1:18; Acts 1:14; Ignatius to Trallians 9; Ignatius to Ephesians, 7, 18.

³³L 1:27; 3:23-24; M 1:1; Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim 2:8-9, Ignatius to Ephesians, 20; Ignatius to Trallians, 9; Ignatius to Smyrnaeans, 1.

³⁴L 1:27-35; M 1:18-24; Phil 2:5-11; cf. Gal 4:4; cf. 1 Tim 3:16, Ignatius to Ephesians 7, 18, 19; Ignatius to Smyrnaeans, 1; cf. Jn 1:1-3, 15; 8:41.

³⁵L 2:4; M 2:1-5, 8; cf. Heb. 7:14.

³⁶L 2:39-51; M 1:2-23; cf. Mk 1:9.

³⁷L 3:1; Mk 15:1-4; Peter (Acts 3:15); 1 Tim 6:13; Jn 19:1-4, Tacitus, Josephus, Ignatius to Magnesians, 11; Ignatius to Trallians, 9; Ignatius to Smyrnaeans, 1.

³⁸L 3:1; L 13:31-33; Mk 6:14-21; Acts 4:27; Ignatius to Smyrnaeans, 1.

³⁹3Q 4:1-13; Mk 1:13.

⁴⁰M 11:1, 28:16; Mk 3:13-19; Mk 6:7; Jn 6:67-71.

⁴¹Mark 1:39; L 17:11-12, 19:1, 19:41; Jn 4:3, 4:43, 46, 5:1, 6:1, 7:1, 10:40, et al.

⁴²L 13:10; Mk 1:21; Jn 6:59, 10:25-30.

⁴³L 21:37-38; Mk 12:35; Jn 7:14.

⁴⁴L 24:19; Mk 6:4, 15; Jn 4:44, 6:14, 67:40, 52; Gos. Thos 31.

⁴⁵L 13:10-13; L 17:12-19; M 17:24-27; 2Q 7:1-10, 18-20; 2Q 11:14-23; Mk 1:29-34; 5:1-43, 7:31-37 et al.; Peter (Acts 2:22); Josephus; Heb 2:3-4?; Jn 2:1-12; Jn 4:46-54; Jn 5:1-15 et al.; Papyrus Egerton (cf. Koester, 212).

²⁸James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990).

²⁹Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995).

parables.⁴⁶ Much of his teaching was standard material from the Law and Prophets: to beware of riches and greed,⁴⁷ to give to the poor,⁴⁸ to be humble,⁴⁹ and to pray.⁵⁰ He taught the importance of repentance,⁵¹ forgiveness,⁵² and bearing spiritual fruit.⁵³ He also taught the reality of a final judgment and hell,⁵⁴ and saw his mission, at least in part, as calling people to repentance.⁵⁵ Jesus even thought of his death as being for the benefit of others.⁵⁶ In fact, his teachings imply that he thought of himself as the long awaited Messiah⁵⁷ who was sent to save the lost.⁵⁸

This, however, was not the kind of teaching which would get a man crucified in first century Palestine. What probably got Jesus into trouble were his teachings which would have been considered seditious or blasphemous. For example, he taught that the Jerusalem temple would one day be destroyed.⁵⁹ Further, he not only claimed that he

personally could grant forgiveness of sins,⁶⁰ but also that he would one day "return"⁶¹ to separate his people from the rest⁶² and execute judgment on the nations,⁶³ something presumably only Yahweh could do. He taught that those who would be his followers must be devoted to him above all else,⁶⁴ which to the Jewish mind would probably have been a clear violation of the first commandment. He also seemed to have taught that people's eternal destiny would depend on their relation to him.⁶⁵ It is therefore not at all surprising that Jesus encountered severe opposition from the religious leadership, who were not only furious at his "blasphemy," but also specifically incensed about his healing on the Sabbath.⁶⁶ Jesus' verbal responses were occasionally quite severe.⁶⁷

In spite of mounting opposition, Jesus attended the Passover in Jerusalem and had a special meal with his disciples.⁶⁸ While in Jerusalem he was betrayed by a follower named Judas,⁶⁹ was tried before Pontius Pilate,⁷⁰ and executed by crucifixion.⁷¹ His tomb was subsequently found empty by some women⁷² and Jesus was widely reported to have appeared alive to numerous people after his death.⁷³ Belief in Jesus' resurrection is *very* widely attested

⁴⁶L 12:16; 13:6-9; L 13:17; L 18:1; M 13:24; 1Q 13:20-21 (cf. Mt 13:13); Mk 4:1-33; Mk 12:1-11.

⁴⁷Mk 10:23-24; L 12:13-15; L 16:14-15, 19-31; 1Q 12:13-31.

⁴⁸M 6:2, 3; 2Q 6:30; 2Q 12:33-34.

⁴⁹L 14:7-11; 1Q 18:14; Mk 9:33-35; Mk 10:43-45; Clement to Corinthians, 30.

⁵⁰L 18:1-7; M6:5-6; 1Q11:1-4, 9-13; Didache 8.

⁵¹L 13:1-5; L 15:8-10; L 19:1-10; Mk 6:7-12; 2Q 15:4-10.

⁵²M 18:23-35; Mk 11:25-26; 2Q 17:3-4; Clement to Corinthians 13; Polycarp, 2.

⁵³L 13:6-9; 2Q 6:43-45; Gos.Thos., 45.

⁵⁴M 13:24-30, 40-43, 49-50; M 25:46; 2Q 10:12-15; 2/3Q 12:4-7; Mk 9:42-48.

⁵⁵Mk 1:14-15; Mk 2:17; L 13:13:1-5; L 15:8-32; L 16:19-31; L 24:44-47; Q 10:12-15; Q 11:32.

⁵⁶Mk 10:45; Mk 14:22-25; L 24:44-47; 1 Cor 11:23-25; cf. 1 Cor 15:17; Jn 6:51-58; cf. Polycarp 7; cf. Clement to Corinthians, 21; 49; cf. Ignatius to Trallians, 2.

⁵⁷Mk 8:27-30; Mk 14:61-63; L 4:15-20; 24:24-26; cf. 2Q 7:18-23; cf. 3Q 10:21-24; Jn 4:25-26. These are passages implying that Jesus thought of himself as Israel's messiah. Many more first strata passages could be produced showing that his followers thought of him as the messiah.

⁵⁸L 19:1-10; L 15:8-10; L 15:11-32; L 16:19-31; L 24:44-47; Mk 8:34-38; M 13:36-52; 2Q 5:4-7; Papyrus Egerton (cf. Koester, 208).

⁵⁹Mk 13:1-3; L 19:41-44; 3Q 13:34-34; Gos. Thos, 71?. Note, however, that the only parallel to L is 3Q, which Mack and Kloppenborg would date to after the destruction of the temple. However, they assume that the judgment teaching of Q was not part of the first layer. In view of the evidence above, however, that that judgment was very much a part of Jesus' teaching, there is no reason for stratifying Q by divisions of Judgmental and Sapiential. Hence, there is no reason not to judge the so-called 3Q as part of the original Q

which predated the destruction of the temple.

⁶⁰Mk 2:5, 7, 10; L 7:47-50; L 24:47; Jn 8:24.

⁶¹L 18:1-8; M 25:31; 2Q 12:39-40; 2Q 17:23-37; Mk 13:26-27; 1 Cor 15:23; 1 Thess 4:13-17; 2 Thess 2:2; Jn 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; Didache, 16.

⁶²Mk 13:27; 2Q 3:16-17; 2Q 17:23-37 M 13:24-30; M 13:36-42; M 25:31-46; 1 Thess 4:13-17; 1 Cor 15:50-54.

⁶³M 13:24-30, 36-43; M 25:31-46; 2Q 3:16-17; 2Q 17:23-37; cf. Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10; 2 Tim 4:11.

⁶⁴1Q 9:57-62; 2Q 14:26-27; Mk 8:34-38; Mk 10:29-30; cf. Jn 12:23-26; Gos. Thos. 55.

⁶⁵Mk 8:34-36; 10:29-30; M 25:31-46; Jn 3:15; Jn 10:9, 28; cf. Gos. Thos, 82.

⁶⁶Mk 2:23-27, Mk 3:6; 7:3-5; Mk 14:1; L 13:14-17; L 14:1-6; Jn 5:8-12, 16-18; Jn 7:1, 25; Jn 11:45-53.

⁶⁷2Q 11:39-52; Mk 7:3-20.

⁶⁸Mk 14:53-65; 1 Cor 11:23-25; Jn 13:1-30.

⁶⁹Mk 27:3-4; Mk 14:10; Jn 18:2-3.

⁷⁰L 23:6-12; Mk 15:1-15; Jn 18:28-40; Polycarp to Philippians, 8; cf. M 27:62-66.

⁷¹Mk 15:21-25; 1 Cor 1:23; 2:2, 8; Gal 3:1; Peter (Acts 2:23, 36); Acts 4:10, 5:30-31; Jn 19:17-18; Josephus; Barnabas, 7; Ignatius to Trallians, 9; Ignatius to Ephesians, 9, 16; Ignatius to Philadelphians, 8; Ignatius to Smyrnaeans, 1; Heb 12:2; Polycarp, 8; Gos. Peter 12:50-13:57.

⁷²L 24:22-23; cf. M 27:63-28:13; cf. 1 Cor 15:4; Gos. Pet 12:50; 13:57.

⁷³L 24:13-15; L 24:31-47; Mk 16; 1 Cor 15:4-

at all levels.⁷⁴ There is even a multiply attested tradition that he ascended into heaven, though only one of these references is in the first strata.⁷⁵

Conclusion/Significance

It is important to make several closing observations: First, some might quickly dismiss the results of this experiment by pointing out that, while showing the traditions to be early, it does not address the claim that the traditions might still be a result of the reflection of various early Jesus communities on the Law and Prophets as applied to Jesus and adapted to their own *Sitz im Leben*. Unfortunately, all we have to go on are the writings of Jesus' followers; still, Streeter's observations are relevant on this issue:

Whenever, however, we find a saying or parable occurring in two different versions—whether it be in Q and Mark, Q and M, Q and L, M and L or M and Mark—we have evidence that the saying in question has come down by two different lines of tradition, which probably bifurcated at a date earlier even than that at which Q was written down.⁷⁶

Since Streeter dates "Q" to the 50's, this would mean that in his estimation, multiply attested traditions would date within about twenty years or less from the time of Jesus death. It is very hard to imagine how an ordinary "run of the mill" Cynic sage would have been transformed into the Christ of faith who did miracles, forgave sins, commanded absolute devotion, died as an atoning sacrifice, was raised from the dead, and promised to come again as the world's judge, in only twenty or thirty years, unless there was some reason in Jesus ministry or teachings that gave rise to these beliefs! It must be remembered that there were numerous would-be messiahs and hundreds of people who got themselves crucified in the first century, but none of them were ever elevated to the status Jesus held after their deaths. So, in other words, even if the historian does not believe that Jesus actually was the Jewish Messiah, did miracles, or rose from the dead, there is every reason to believe that the reconstruction of the historical Jesus presented above at least goes back to the immediate followers of

Jesus, if not to Jesus himself, and is not simply the creation of various independent Jesus communities.⁷⁷

Second, the overview of Jesus' life presented in this paper is *very* minimal and assumes an unrealistic degree of skepticism. If all of "M" and "L" were included, if all multiply attested first century sources were included, or if particular multiply attested events or sayings were included, the sketch of Jesus' life would be considerably expanded.

Third, it must be recognized that truth is not confined to that which is multiply attested. People who have shown themselves to be generally honest and reliable deserve to be taken seriously even when there is no collaborating evidence. Studies by Ramsey,⁷⁸ Sherwin-White,⁷⁹ Colin Hemer⁸⁰ and others⁸¹ have confirmed the high reliability of

Since historians often accept as historical, information obtained from sources written hundreds of years after the fact, Luke, who writes only thirty to ninety years after Jesus' time, deserves to be given more of the benefit of the doubt than he has been given by critical scholarship.

the writer of Luke/Acts. Since historians often accept as historical, information obtained from sources written hundreds of years after the fact (often not doubly attested, e.g., Livy, Plutarch, Arrianus), Luke, who writes only thirty to ninety years after Jesus' time, deserves to be given more of the benefit of the doubt than he has been given by critical scholarship.

Finally, this study has shown that even when a high degree of skepticism is applied to the selection of first strata sources, the criterion of multiple attestation can demonstrate that the essential outline of the Gospel story must come from the very earliest followers of Jesus if not from Jesus himself. The picture of Jesus which emerges from such a minimal study is substantially closer to the Gospel accounts than the reconstructions offered by Crossan and numerous others in the third quest for the historical Jesus.

[PTR]

8; Acts 1:3; Jn 20:10-18, 19-21, 24-29; Jn 21:1-14.

⁷⁴L 24:13-53; M 27:63-64; M 28:11-15; Mk 16:6; cf. Q2 11:29-32 as interpreted by Matthew; Gal 1:1; Rom 4:24; Rom 8:11; Rom 14:9; 1 Cor 1:23; 1 Cor 15:3-20; Acts 1:22; Peter (Acts 2:24; 3:13-15; 3:26-4:2, 10; 5:30-31); Apostles (Acts 4:33); Paul (Acts 17:2-3; 26:23); Jn 20:1-9; Josephus; Polycarp to Philipppians, 1; Ignatius to Ephesians, 20; Ignatius to Magnesians, 9, 11; Ignatius to Trallians, 9; Ignatius to Philadelphians, 8, 9; Ignatius to Smyrnaeans, 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 12; Clement to Corinthians 24 and 42; Heb 12:20; 1 Pet 1:3; 3:20; Gos. Peter 12:50-13:57.

⁷⁵L 24:51; Peter (Acts 5:30-31); Barnabas 15; Acts 1:2, 9-11.

⁷⁶Streeter, *Four Gospels*, 270.

⁷⁷*contra* Mack, *Who Wrote*.

⁷⁸E.g., William Ramsey, *St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1951); Pauline and Other Studies in Early Christianity (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970); The Cities of St. Paul. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1949).

⁷⁹A.N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Law and Roman Society in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1963).

⁸⁰Colin Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990).

⁸¹See for example the many essays in the six volume series *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting*, ed. by Bruce Winter (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994-).

Book Reviews

Jesus Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents the Historical Jesus

- edited by Michael J. Wilkins and J.P. Moreland
(Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995).

Reviewed by Jay Wesley Richards

I recently had one of those awkward conversations that seminarians find themselves in when interacting in "secular" circles. A medical technician asked me what I was studying, and I told her "theology." Her mind went immediately to a group of scholars who have gotten much press recently by putatively debunking many of the things Christians believe about Jesus. She didn't know much about these scholars, but she was pretty sure they had shown that Jesus wasn't who Christians say he was, that he didn't claim to be the Son of God, and she even thought (incorrectly) that they argued that Jesus never really existed. I said she was referring to the Jesus Seminar.¹ She asked my opinion of them, and of course, I obliged her. I said they were a cadre of skeptics—some academics, some not—adept at gaining attention for their contentious project of casting ballots according to eccentric criteria in order to determine which sayings of Jesus are likely authentic, and which are not. I mentioned that they did not represent a cross section of scholarship, that their criteria were so skeptical that they would bar much of what historians of all stripes take for granted, and that their "findings" tended to be less the result of an earnest search for the truth than conclusions entailed by their prior metaphysical assumptions, such as naturalism. She seemed to get what I was saying, but I sensed that it didn't matter. I was assuming she knew the gist of the Jesus Seminars' arguments. But of course she didn't. She had not the slightest idea what their *arguments* were. Why bother, after all? Since the mainstream media reported on them so

frequently, there must be something to their project.

This conversation may be a microcosm of how the Jesus Seminar has managed to gain such notoriety. In two phrases, they are masters of *controversy* and *good press coverage*. Lots of people are aware of their claims; few attend to their arguments. But this doesn't prevent the gullible and even the not so gullible from granting credence to their conclusions. This is unfortunate, because their arguments tend to wither under scrutiny. While I'm not sure how Christians should combat this successful propaganda campaign, there are now several books available challenging their arguments. Given the status of the Jesus Seminar, responsibility requires that Christian leaders familiarize themselves with the debate. *Jesus Under Fire* is a good place to start. Its authors masterfully expose the soft underbelly of the Jesus Seminar. Underneath a dazzling apparatus of an apparent scientific methodology lies a cluster of presuppositions that makes the Seminar's conclusions look like little more than assertions of metaphysical and historical preferences. The "fellows" of the Seminar are to be commended for admitting many of their assumptions up front, for example, "Premise 9: Jesus' disciples were oral and itinerant: they moved around and revised his sayings and parables as the situation demanded." So they take as given the proposition that the disciples played fast and loose with the words of their Master and Lord. They are certainly free to assume this. But no one should mistake this proposition for a "finding" rendered certain by their research. Unfortunately, other presuppositions (such as naturalism) remain implicit, and exercise an enormous influence over the conclusions of the Seminar.

Jesus Under Fire is a collection of essays from evangelical scholars dealing with various issues raised by the Jesus Seminar. The breadth of treatment prevents me from discussing their arguments in detail here; however, this doesn't prevent me from recommending it. This is essential reading for anyone interested in the antics of the Jesus Seminar in particular, as well as Life of Jesus research in general. The collection combines scholarliness with accessibility, which may help to redress the popular propaganda campaign waged by the Jesus Seminar.

The editors' introduction provides a short summary of the contents to follow, as well as a short treatment of the philosophical assumptions of the Jesus Seminar's "fellows." The first essays by biblical scholars (Craig L. Blomberg, Scot McKnight, Darrell L. Bock and Craig A. Evans) treat several issues in historical methodology and biblical studies. A number of illuminating distinctions emerge here, most of which are useful for avoiding certain fallacies common in biblical studies. The last essay by an archaeologist and

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¹Two recent works by "fellows" of the Jesus Seminar are Robert Funk, Roy Hoover, et al., *The Five Gospels: What Did Jesus Really Say?* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), and *The Gospel of Mark: Red Letter Edition*, ed. by Robert Funk and Mahlon Smith (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge Press, 1991). Both these works consider what Jesus *said*. The current project of the Seminar is to consider what Jesus *did*.

historian (Edwin Yamauchi) discusses extrabiblical evidence for the historical Jesus. One important point these essays demonstrate is that the Jesus Seminar falsely purports to represent a faithful cross section of biblical scholarship. In fact, it distinguishes itself from the mainstream of biblical scholarship by assuming inexplicably that the apocryphal gospel of *Thomas* is actually earlier than the canonical gospels ("Premise 24: Thomas represents an earlier stage of the tradition than do the canonical Gospels.") Very few biblical scholars share this contentious assumption. Its prominence has profound implications for their evaluation of the accuracy and historical reliability of the canonical gospels, as well as their historical reconstructions.

The second half of the collection—most by philosophers—considers the philosophical assumptions of the Jesus Seminar, focusing on miracles (Gary Habermas), Jesus' resurrection (William Lane Craig), and religious exclusivism (R. Douglas Geivett). Many of the premises exposed here seem to be ones which the Jesus Seminar shares with many biblical scholars. Perhaps for this reason the fellows of the Seminar do not feel obliged to state explicitly that they presuppose, for example, naturalism and anti-supernaturalism. For, unlike their commitment to the antiquity of the gospel of *Thomas* relative to the canonical gospels, they draw on something of a consensus among biblical scholars in assuming that Jesus didn't really raise anyone from the dead, and he certainly wasn't so raised. So the analysis of these implicit assumptions has applicability beyond simply the Jesus Seminar. This makes *Jesus Under Fire* useful for all students of biblical studies, as well as anyone seeking familiarity with such issues. Again, it's hardly surprising that anyone who *assumes* that the dead can't be raised would *conclude* that Jesus wasn't raised. This is *apriorism* of the most trivial and unconvincing sort. These philosophers' essays ably illustrate the ways in which the Jesus Seminar's conclusions are often entailed by the premises they bring to their study of the biblical texts.

Like so many attempts to reconstruct the "historical Jesus" along naturalistic lines, the figure the Jesus Seminar wrings from its sources ends up endorsing its partisans' theological and ethical preferences. George Tyrells noted that certain 19th century "life of Jesus" scholars looked into a well and saw their own reflection at the bottom, mistaking that reflection for a discovery. Those scholars found in Jesus a good nineteenth century liberal proclaiming the "fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" ("fogbom"). The Jesus Seminar sees an aphorism-spouting itinerant cynic sage with no messianic aspirations and no "bigoted" religious exclusivism. Some of their claims about the "real" Jesus are a paradigm of projection. One member of the Jesus Seminar concludes that Jesus' example "clearly implies universal health care as an immediate goal."² Not surprisingly, as Doug Geivett notes in his essay, Jesus ends up as just the sort of character one would expect to be concocted by tenured American academics, "a radical social

visionary and reformer, driven by a 'politics of compassion' to subvert existing social structures that repressed the poor and kept women in their place. He is portrayed as the arch-egalitarian of first-century Palestine, an iconoclast bent on reshaping public policy" (186). While these claims are laced with half truths, such a Jesus appears adrift in his social setting, and lacks precisely those traits that such academics would find offensive. These exercises in projection get a little boring and tedious after a while. Everyone seems bent on conscripting Jesus for their own ideals. Instead of the Redeemer, Jesus ends up the Great Endorser.

Of course the authors of *Jesus Under Fire* are not content simply to assert that the canonical portrayal of Jesus is just the historical Jesus. Rather, they argue for the conclusion that the canonical portrayal is a faithful rendering of the historical Jesus. Moreover, they refuse to accept the disastrous false dilemma that either we act piously, and embrace the "Christ of faith," or we follow historical reason and its product, the "Jesus of history." They understand more clearly than many in the theological guild that the Christian claim about the Christ of faith is intrinsically and inextricably tethered to the Jesus of history. With a plausible use of historical evidence and right reason, *Jesus Under Fire* goes some way toward maintaining and defending that link.

Paul: The Mind of The Apostle

- by A.N. Wilson. New York: W. W. Norton, 1987.

Reviewed by Robert Orlando

Following the success of his earlier biographies of C.S. Lewis, Tolstoy and Jesus, A.N. Wilson has once again penetrated the fragmented manuscripts and historical sketches of the past to uncover a genuine, flesh and blood character; one of Western Civilization's most enigmatic figures—the Apostle Paul. Avoiding the pitfalls of blind faith—conceding all troublesome inaccuracies of holy writ to the realm of mystery, or Post Enlightenment criticism—and its Nietzschean "doing theology with a hammer"—this narrative finds its center in the passionate mind of the Apostle.

The story begins on July 19, 64 A.D. as a fire rages in Rome under the reign of Nero. Wilson utilizes the Roman authorities' search through incendiary groups of Jews and early Christians called "the Way" as a point of departure, leading his readers into the mind of Paul. He raises the question: could this fiery act of rebellion have been caused by a man who earlier stated "let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God"? By juxtaposing the contrary words of Paul against the chaotic background of the burning streets, Wilson offers the Apostle's disappearance as a mystery to be solved by reading the history of his life.

A Jew born in Tarsus, then a hotbed of Greek mystery religions such as the cult of Mithras, from an early age Paul

²In Marcus Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus and the Heart of Contemporary Faith* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), 60. Quoted in D. Geivett's article in *Jesus Under Fire*, 186.

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witnessed ritual ceremonies involving blood sacrifices and heroic savior gods. This environment would prepare him for the great synthesis of the Greek and Hebraic worlds, Christianity; "Paul thought in Greek, he wrote in Greek . . . he is the great conduit through which Jewish concepts, stories and patterns of thought came to the Gentile world." Exposed to the great seaports and trade routes while working as a tentmaker, the future missionary developed his vision of a Jewish faith stretching far beyond the boundaries of Jerusalem into the Gentile world, "not converting Romans to Christians, but . . . Christians to Romans."

A devout student of "rabbinical literature on subjects such as eating, military service, or sex," Paul never intended to start a new religion. He was a "tentmaker with a religious obsession" who spent his youth in Jerusalem, becoming a temple guard of the high priest around the year 33 A.D., persecuting the early followers of the "Galilean troublemaker" and his cohorts Stephen, Peter, and James.

The main theme of Romans separates Paul's brand of Christianity from that of Jesus or the Apostles at Jerusalem: the story of Christ is not an external religion. It is an internal way of life; a life characterized by a divine romance with God and universal love for others.

"The Crucifixion became the focus of Paul's obsessive religious attention," combining his early visions of blood from the sacrificial bulls of Mithras with his mystical identification with the Passover lamb. In his letters, he would later write that "it was Paul himself who was nailed to that instrument of torture, Paul who died, Paul who suffered, Paul who rose. [sic]"

By integrating the narrative of Luke's "Acts" with Paul's epistles to the early churches, Wilson attempts an historical sketch of Paul's spiritual journey, in the process referring to numerous New Testament scholars. It begins with a mysterious vision on the road to Damascus. "When we turn to Paul's own account of how he changed from being a persecutor of The Way to the most ardent disciple of Jesus, we find a markedly different story. No Damascus Road experience is mentioned, although by implication we may infer that the visionary experience did take place in or near Damascus." The determining event of Paul's life and quite possibly Western civilization, Wilson proposes, is complicated by conflicting testimonies between Luke and Paul, revealing a deeper struggle for Apostolic authority in the early church. "Paul underlines the fact that the revelation was unique and personal to himself and that his experience of the risen Jesus owed nothing to the testimony of Peter, James and John." Just as Homer designed his *Iliad*, Paul framed the story of his dramatic conversion "to draw out the mythological implications of an old religion," not to create a new one.

As sojourner through the Arabian desert, traveling the planes of consciousness, Paul experienced his deepest revelations. Wilson hints at Paul's maniacal proclivities toward absolute assurance of his self-imposed authority: "The more distinct he became from the older followers of Jesus, the more urgently he would try to suggest that he alone had understood the implications of what they had been the first to believe." To remain a "free man," Paul plied his trade while traveling the great urban centers of the Roman world, and observing "men and women—Greek, Arab, Jewish and Roman" in their "ethnic, religious, and political conflicts." It was during this period that he pondered the historical meaning of Jesus' death, something of "cosmic religious significance," and searched for a new synthesis, not only for the Jerusalem, but for a "universal canvas" of Jews and Gentiles. Paul strongly believed that he was living at the end of history—the messianic age—and all his teachings regarding public and domestic life were seen through an apocalyptic lens; "God is choosing his own, and at any minute the Day of Christ will dawn."

After further conflict with James and Peter, Paul "turned his back on Palestinian Judaism" in favor of nurturing the early church in the cosmopolitan centers of Rome, Antioch, Ephesus, and Corinth. It was a world run by imperial despots of the likes of Caligula, Tiberius, and Claudius, filled with images of pagan gods, Zeus, Aphrodite and Dionysis, and inundated with corruption, incest, and murder. There existed many schools of thought, including "the revived Platonism of the first century A.D....of the Jewish Alexandrian Philo, who made Moses' encounters with the Deity comparable with The Good in Plato's dialogues" and Stoicism, which "was the received wisdom of the governing and thinking classes of that period, rather as liberalism is in Europe and the United States today." For Paul, these world views left "unanswered and untouched the two most troubling elements in the observed universe; namely, its apparently blameless suffering and its boundless wickedness," creating fertile soil for the seeds of monotheism—"a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to Gentiles."

Forging his spiritual Odyssey, Paul crossed the great seas, conquering the known world through his preaching, healings, and writings. His letters addressed the parochial needs of the first Jewish and Gentile converts: in Corinth, sexual immorality and marriage, in Ephesus, false idols, and in Galatia, the battle over circumcision, which was hotly contested by Peter and the other Apostles. "We know that the followers of Peter and James—Jewish Christians, Ebionites, Judaisers, call them what you will—eventually lost the argument with the Paul-lites, the Gentiles for whom the word Christ was synonymous not with the Anointed Jewish Deliverer of Israel, so much as with an inner known God." Though retrograde to our modern standards, Paul also addressed slavery, homosexuality and women's issues. "In those days you would have been hard put to find anyone who believed in sexual equality in the modern sense, and the person who comes closest to it is, strangely enough, Paul." His overall mission was to take the gospel (good news) to the ends of the world.

Like an historical volcano, Wilson's erudition, character sketching and world painting erupts into a section on Paul's

"Letter to The Romans"—the essence of his teachings. Concurrent to the epistle, it is here that "Paul: The Mind of The Apostle" reaches its most passionate synthesis by combining the flesh, bones, and sinews of Pauline thought into one body. "The reason that Romans is so important is that unlike any of the Gospels, it sails straight into the heart of the deepest metaphysical questions: what is God like? Why was Christ necessary? How does it make any difference to life—to the individual human life and to human history—whether you believe in Christ or not?" Wilson makes clear that the main theme of Romans separates Paul's brand of Christianity from that of Jesus or the Apostles at Jerusalem: the story of Christ is not an external religion. It is an internal way of life—a life characterized by a divine romance with God and universal love for others. "Romans . . . is the most interesting, as well as the most impenetrably difficult, book about religion ever written."

In 57 A.D., against the warnings of his friends, Paul raised donations from his wealthy brethren in Macedonia and Achaia to help fight food shortages in the church of Judea. It would be his last visit and "one last chance to persuade the brothers and friends of Jesus that Christ was not so much the man they remembered, but a presence of divine love in the hearts of believers." Charged with provoking a riot, Paul was apprehended and forced to stand before the Sanhedrin. Aware of an assassination plot, the commandant made "the decision to get Paul out of the city as soon as possible and

send him to Caesaria." Forced to defend his Jewishness before the procurator Marcus Felix, Paul used a diatribe of Old Testament prophecies and his status as a Roman citizen to hurl his famous utterance over the heads of his antagonists, "I appeal unto Caesar!" After a final trial in Rome, Paul vanishes from the pages of Luke's manuscript back into the fiery streets.

Wilson's narrative circumvents the conflicting views of Paul as myth-maker and his insistence on the historical meaning of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. This is a weakness in his treatment, since Paul's words in Corinthians—"if Christ was not raised then neither our preaching nor your faith has any meaning at all"—derive their power from his conviction in the facts. The biography also avoids the most difficult task of interpreting Paul's profound vision on the Road to Damascus. However, A.N. Wilson has depicted a character of three dimensional human qualities from what could be an impervious subject. He remembers Paul in terms of the legacy of his message and his madness. "A man who sees visions and who claims to know the mind of God, must by some definitions be mad. Perhaps by some definitions, like so many religious geniuses, Paul was mad as Blake, as mad as Dostoevsky, as mad as Simone Weil. He had an answer to such a view. 'Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?'"

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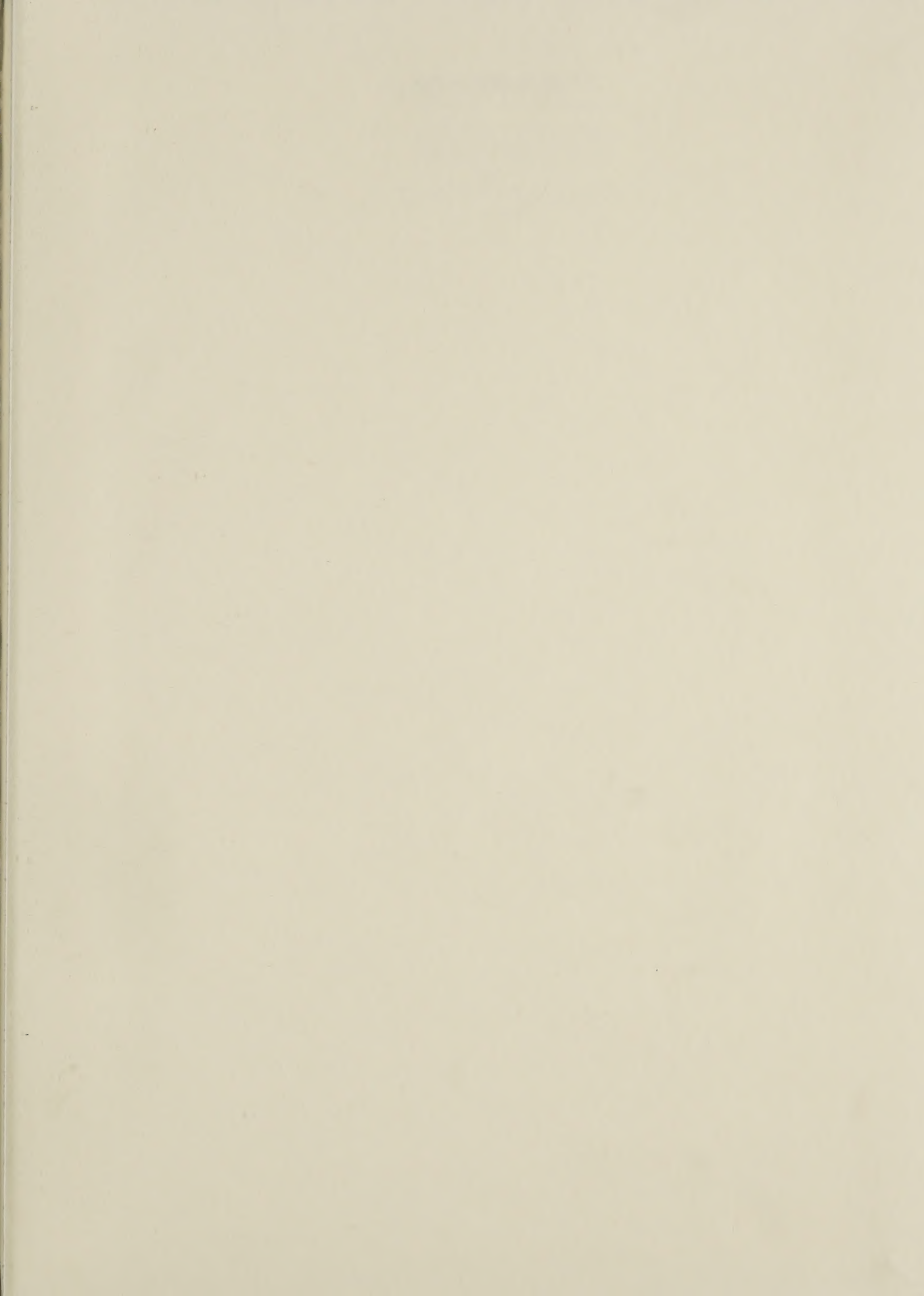
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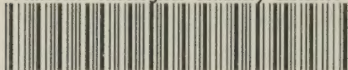
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